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FBIS-SOV-96-083 *29 April 1996*

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Russia: Yeltsin on Danger of Communists Winning Elections

LD2804104996 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1000 GMT 28 Apr 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast by announcer Tatyana Khudobina]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Boris Yeltsin and Nursultan Nazarbayev signed very important inter-governmental agreements in Almaty yesterday. The Kazakh president called the agreement on Kazakh oil exports via the Russian Black Sea terminals "a historic event." Yeltsin said this decision will benefit both Russia and Kazakhstan. [passage omitted]

[Begin Yeltsin recording] Should communists win, banks and entrepreneurs will lose everything. This is because property will be nationalized, there will be no private property and no land ownership. And this means war, this means division. We already had it all before in Russia's history. This is why entrepreneurs and bankers are very actively campaigning in support of the president. [end recording]

Russia: Yeltsin Warns on Consequences of Zyuganov, Zhirinovskiy

LD2604141196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1224 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 26 (Interfax) — President Boris Yeltsin believes that Russia will have enough wisdom "not to allow the re-installation in this country of an administrative command system, not to mention the restoration of the ways of the Soviet system."

The president answered earlier faxed questions of journalists from the Ivanovo region that he does not believe in the gradual halt of the country's market economy. "We would have to pay too high a price," he said, "all the way to civil war, the collapse of government, international isolation, and the reversion of Russia to the ogre of the civilized world."

Yeltsin is sure that the people, "having visited most of the circles of Bolshevik Hell — repressions, hunger, rationing, spiritual degradation — will not voluntarily submit again to the Communist yoke and kneel again on their knees."

"Will our country be democratic?" is the question facing our country, Yeltsin said. "Will we respect human rights? Will we have freedom? Will this freedom be guaranteed by the firmness of the constitution and the inviolability of private property? Will social security for the poor be guaranteed? Will our government be a full-fledged member of the international community?"

Yeltsin is doing all he can to prevent the triumph of Communist leader Gennadiy Zyuganov or ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy at the June 16 elections. "Both will be catastrophic for Russia. The first, perhaps after some time, the second — immediately," Yeltsin said.

Asked about the prospects for Russia's struggling textile industry (which is led by Ivanovo), Yeltsin answered sincerely that he would not "make baseless promises" in order to gain votes "the way some of my opponents are."

But he did say he saw several major directions for solving the industry's woes. "We need to develop and simplify our export-import operations, strengthen ties for raw materials from cotton-producing countries, and constantly provide the industry with raw materials," he said. Russia is already developing a complex of factory-towns, and Yeltsin will "defend the competitiveness of Russian producers, especially in the technology field, which will include conversion from the military industry," he said.

He stressed that his recent order on property rights was meant "neither to demolish nor recreate the collective farm system." Instead, he wanted to "begin changing the psychology of the farmers, back to their former closeness with the land," he said. "We need to have the hope of guaranteeing our future and our children's future, and the ownership of land is one of the most reliable guarantees for a person's well-being."

Russia: Yeltsin Pledges Support for Domestic Producers

LD2604130896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1201 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW April 26 (Itar-Tass) — President Boris Yeltsin promised "reasonable protectionism" to competitive Russian producers, but refused to follow suit of his election competitors and promise help to everyone.

"President Boris Yeltsin intends to increase support to domestic producers, but will not give empty promises for upcoming elections as his opponents do", the presidential press service said on Friday quoting Yeltsin's answers to questions of regional correspondents submitted through the recently created Agency for Regional Press.

"The measures to support competitive domestic goods are well-known — they are reasonable protectionism. However, with its help there is sense to protect truly efficient domestic industries and domestic goods of quality", Yeltsin was quoted as saying.

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Therefore, it is necessary to develop competition within various industries and end the monopolism of certain enterprises, according to the president.

Russia: May Day Revival Seen as Yeltsin Election Ploy

MM2604141996 Moscow TRUD in Russian 25 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Boris Gneushev: "May Day and the Elections"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Moscow is once again preparing to mark May Day "just as before" — with processions, outdoor parties, and merriment. This initiative on the part of the capital's "Citizens" fund was to the liking, it would appear, not only of [NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA editor Vitaliy] Tretyakov and Moscow Mayor Yuriy Luzhkov. The Russian president was no mere bystander either. [passage omitted]

The people want calm and stability in their everyday lives and confidence in the future. They want strong government, but not drastic measures, even if the architects of new revolutionary theories promise to show the world "the miracle of Russian spiritual revival."

It was this very nostalgia that partly secured victory for the Communists in the parliamentary elections last year. Boris Yeltsin has drawn the conclusions and organized "therapy" — he has introduced order over the issue of pay, begun to eradicate delays in the payment of pensions, and signed edicts on increasing the minimum pension, on land, on restoring savings, on helping the agricultural complex, and so forth. Speaking at the congress of his supporters' movement, Boris Yeltsin named the family as his major task for his second presidential term. Not the abstract "society," or "great Russia," or "statehood," or a "superpower," but the family has been chosen by the president as the main focus of his attention. He assured his supporters that he would consider the welfare and prosperity of the ordinary family as the main yardstick of his activity.

This election guideline is having an extremely sobering effect on the electorate, who are nostalgic for the stagnation era. The people have already begun to realize that what they want is not the stagnation era in its entirety, but "the stagnation era with beer and sausage meat, but no Communists." Boris Yeltsin has understood this and taken account of it in his election campaign. It is no accident that the president has also restored state rights to the Banner of Victory, that banner of the reddest hue under which the majority of our bygone May Days were passed.

The May Day celebrations, which are being inaugurated on a grand scale, fit into Boris Yeltsin's plans perfectly. The mass merriment, concerts, street shows, tea-parties, free entry to museums, galleries, theaters, and so forth, are designed to distract attention from the "political events" planned by the Communist opposition — given, of course, that the law enforcement organs can restrain extremists from any violent "May Day surprises."

Russia: Chernomyrdin: Only Yeltsin Able To Carry Out Reforms

LD2604164696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1552 GMT 26 Apr 96

[By Gennadiy Yezhov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 26 (Itar-Tass) — Russia has no leader who could "take over the initiative of reforms" from President Boris Yeltsin, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin said at a news conference today.

He said some of Yeltsin's qualities make him "a solely preferable candidate" for president to be re-elected on June 16 and "the sole leader who can continue the started reforms."

Chernomyrdin has spelled the qualities "a real understanding of the historical changes which had happened in the country, the strong will of Boris Yeltsin and his ability to find solutions in the hardest and extreme situations."

In addition, Chernomyrdin continued, "Boris Yeltsin is a man who has a great knowledge, economic and political, party and state experience."

"Only Boris Yeltsin can lead Russia on its present difficult way and steer it onto a normal track of development. That is why I back the candidacy of the present president for re-election for the second term, that is why he is backed by the government, that is why all the Russians should back him," Chernomyrdin said.

"We should give Yeltsin the opportunity to complete the democratic and market reforms and make them irreversible for ever," the premier said.

Russia: Yeltsin Comments on Omsk Attack on Gorbachev

LD2704104796 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1000 GMT 27 Apr 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] There are 50 days left until the Russian presidential elections. However, political

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passions surrounding the candidates makes their pre-election trips somewhat unsafe. This was confirmed by the recent attack on Mikhail Gorbachev in Omsk. Commenting on that incident today, Boris Yeltsin demonstrated a state approach.

[Begin Yeltsin recording] It was unpleasant, of course. And I, as President, as the defender of the constitutional rights of every citizen of the Russian Federation, should react to it. At least, I shall personally investigate this incident. [end recording]

Russia: Gorbachev Not To Discuss Chechnya During Election Campaign

LD2604163896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1438 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 26 (Interfax) — Ex-Soviet President and Russian presidential candidate Mikhail Gorbachev has suggested that such issues as the war in Chechnya, possible steps toward CIS integration and financial stability be left outside the presidential campaign.

"There must be no speculation on these topics because they are very serious," he told a news conference in Moscow Friday.

Gorbachev confirmed that if he is elected president, he "will not use the constitutional right to disband the State Duma and will do everything to develop constructive cooperation" with parliament.

He recalled that while meeting with Kemerovo regional parliament speaker Aman Tuleyev, he upheld his proposal that all presidential candidates sign an agreement stating that they "favor free elections and will respect the will of the people, no matter who is elected president."

After his Siberian tour, Gorbachev concluded that "60 to 70 percent of voters have not decided for whom to cast their ballots," regarding the candidacies of both the incumbent Russian President Boris Yeltsin and leader of the Communist Party Gennadiy Zyuganov as unacceptable.

Gorbachev believes that if there is no adequate public reaction to the April 24 assault on him as a presidential candidate, when he was struck on the head by a resident of Omsk, such incidents may undermine the presidential campaign.

He also said that now that Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev is dead, the Chechen side will be less willing to compromise. While Dudayev had a certain degree of control over the rebels, there is now a threat that the separatists will choose what Gorbachev called the tactics of individual terror. "We should seek political talks and search for a peaceful outcome," he said.

In connection with the 10th anniversary of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant Gorbachev said that the situation regarding aid to its victims is worse now than in Soviet times.

Russia: Gorbachev Announces Main Points of Election Platform

LD2704162896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1620 GMT 27 Apr 96

[By Lyudmila Aleksandrova]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, April 27 (Itar-Tass) — Ex-Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev called for an immediate and unconditional commencement of talks with Chechen rebels in order to reach a ceasefire agreement and begin "serious negotiations on the future status of Chechnya."

The power of president should be counterbalanced by the power of the Federal Assembly and government, which need to be increased, and an independent judicial branch, Gorbachev told his supporters on Saturday as he was announcing the main points of his election platform as a presidential candidate.

Gorbachev pledged to develop constructive cooperation with the State Duma, denounce crime, "destroy the sinister alliance of unscrupulous politicians, corrupt bureaucrats and the criminal world" and conduct a "clean-hands" operation against corruption.

He believes that Russia needs to carry out military reform to build a strong, modern and well-equipped army.

Gorbachev said he will seek to build a social welfare state which "will provide people with an opportunity to earn money, encourage initiative and protect pensioners, children and disabled people."

The ex-Soviet leader pledged to take urgent measures to resolve acute social problems and close the gap between the rich and the poor, as well as to protect Russian culture, ensure free education and health care and support science.

He also promised to develop comprehensive ties with other CIS countries, while respecting the independence of each of them, and conduct a realistic foreign policy.

Gorbachev's supporters set up a new public and political movement, Civic Forum, and elected him as its leader.

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Gorbachev said that if he loses presidential elections, he will pay special attention to the activity of the new movement.

Its executive committee will be headed by Vasiliy Lipitsky, co-chair of the Russian Social Democratic Union.

Russia: Zyuganov Comments on Gorbachev's Chances for President

LD2604134796 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1252 GMT 26 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Viktor Troyanovskiy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] NOVGOROD, April 26 (Itar-Tass) — "Gorbachev's chances to win the presidential elections are equal to zero," leader of the Russian Communist Party Gennadiy Zyuganov, a presidential candidate, told Itar-Tass here on Friday. He arrived in Novgorod, stumping the country's North-West.

In the opinion of the Communist Party leader who spoke at a news conference here, the ex-president of the former Soviet Union has an equally "slight chance" to pool with centrist forces.

"Mikhail Gorbachev does not enjoy support from the main forces in the country, and his rating is very low," Zyuganov claimed.

Turning to his own prospects, the candidate from the people's patriotic bloc does not preclude a chance of talks with some presidential candidates, among whom, to his mind, "there are such who will be satisfied with the post of prime minister".

However, Zyuganov did not specify whom he meant exactly.

The Russian Communist leader assured that he was against reprisals and against political revenge.

Russia: Zyuganov Receives 'Low-Key Welcome' in St Petersburg

LD2704182396 Moscow NTV in Russian 1500 GMT 27 Apr 96

[From the "Segodnya" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Communist presidential candidate Gennadiy Zyuganov announced today that he was ready to meet the major Russian bankers who have called upon politicians to compromise. Zyuganov had arrived in St. Petersburg, where he developed some of the other ideas in his policies, too.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent, over video of Zyuganov on walkabout, laying wreath, addressing meeting] Gennadiy Zyuganov, on his election campaign tour around Russia, was in the homeland of the revolution — St. Petersburg — today. The city gave the communist leader a low-key welcome. With no fuss and pomp, Zyuganov decided to visit the memorial at the Piskarevskoye cemetery, where he laid flowers at the main monument. He decided not to make any speeches. He saved his strong words for the audience at a meeting of delegates from hero-cities.

The presidential candidate told the veterans that the current authorities are trying to take away from them the most precious thing — the homeland. Before a grateful audience, Gennadiy Zyuganov painted a horrifying picture of the calamities that have overtaken Russia. However, the argument that impressed the veterans most was that school textbooks no longer even mention Pushkin and Tolstoy, and the concept of the fatherland is missing altogether from some publications. In order to put everything in its place, the opposition candidate proposed that those assembled should unite without delay.

[Zyuganov, from rostrum] I am convinced that, united, we will without fail regenerate our long-suffering fatherland. Long live our unity, long live our victory! [Cheers and applause]

[Correspondent, over video of people sweeping streets and clearing litter from parks] The organizers of the event, seizing on the idea, proclaimed that with the emergence of a single candidate, there will be celebrations in their neck of the woods, too.

However, the city authorities refused to have anything to do with the communist leader. While Gennadiy Zyuganov talked to veterans about the catastrophe on a Russian-wide scale, St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoliy Sobchak was holding a city-wide subbotnik [voluntary work day], setting an example by helping the citizens clear up the dirt. He said he was not interested in Zyuganov's arrival, and was certainly not intending to help him organize meetings with the voters.

[Correspondent, to Sobchak] Why did Zyuganov not plan any street meetings in St. Petersburg, like he did in Voronezh and Lipetsk?

[Sobchak] Well, the thing is that we do not have many supporters of Zyuganov's ideas here in St. Petersburg, so I think nothing was planned. Our city traditionally does not vote for them.

[Correspondent] Gennadiy Zyuganov is unlikely to be satisfied with the time he spent in Novgorod and St. Petersburg. His trip round the two regions seems unlikely to bring him in any more votes. [end recording]

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Russia: Zhirinovskiy Rules Out Cooperation With Zyuganov

LD2804175796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1710 GMT 28 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] STAVROPOL, April 28 (Interfax) — A candidate for the Russian presidency, leader of the Liberal Democratic Party and its faction in the State Duma Vladimir Zhirinovskiy has dismissed the possibility of cooperation with the Communist leader Gennadiy Zyuganov at the presidential elections on June 16. Zhirinovskiy made this statement on Sunday meeting with Stavropol voters.

He said that he asks his voters to cast their ballots "against all those who were in power or are seeking it proceeding from selfish aims."

Zhirinovskiy also said that the coming to power on June 16 of Democrats or Communists will be "the same evil for the country." This can be avoided, he said, if he is elected president.

Speaking about other presidential candidates, Zhirinovskiy described them as follows: Boris Yeltsin, he said, "is tired already and he should have a rest," Gennadiy Zyuganov "is a mere party functionary who thinks not about Russia but of his own interests," Grigoriy Yavlinskiy "has made a grave mistake in his youth, when he devoted himself to boxing in Lvov because this affected his ability to think."

Speaking about the settlement of the situation in Chechnya, Zhirinovskiy said that if he is elected president, he will issue an ultimatum to the militants demanding their full capitulation within ten days. If they reject the ultimatum, "Chechen villages and the entire Chechnya will be covered with blue clouds of smoke from missiles and projectiles."

The LDPR [Liberal Democratic Party of Russia] leader left Stavropol for Rostov-on-Don on Sunday evening.

Russia: Zhirinovskiy Denies Negotiating With Communists

LD2604143896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1224 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 26 (Interfax) — Leader of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR) Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, a candidate for the Russian presidency, told a news conference in the State Duma that he has never negotiated cooperation with any political party in the election campaign and will never do so.

A report that the LDPR and the Communists were negotiating "closer cooperation in organizing functions during the election campaign" emerged recently with reference to a source in the LDPR.

Zhirinovskiy describes all statements on the subject as provocations.

The polls conducted by his party in Russian regions indicate that Zhirinovskiy himself and the Communist leader Gennadiy Zyuganov are the most realistic candidates at the upcoming presidential elections, he said.

"The current forecasts about the two most realistic candidates for the presidency — President Yeltsin and Gennadiy Zyuganov are wrong by 90 percent," he said.

According to him, the real lineup of forces is the following: Zyuganov is in the lead in some regions, although the leaders of the Communist party and the LDPR have equal ratings, but "no one stands close to us," claims Zhirinovskiy.

He believes that on June 16 Zyuganov will collect 21 percent of the votes, he himself will get 20 percent, while Yeltsin "will be helped to reach 10 percent."

Russia: Lebed, Gaydar, Yavlinskiy on Possible Alliance

LD2804212996 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 28 Apr 96

[Interview with Grigoriy Yavlinskiy by Nikolay Svanidze at the Russian Television Studio in Moscow on the "Mirror" program — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Svanidze] We have Grigoriy Alekseyevich Yavlinskiy live in the "Mirror" program studio. I would like to propose to Grigoriy Alekseyevich that we postpone our conversation for a few minutes in order to take a look at a couple of videos:

[Begin recording] [Svanidze, interviewing Aleksandr Lebed] Aleksandr Ivanovich, what has happened between you, Yavlinskiy, and Fedorov? Please explain, everybody is interested. Myths about your alliance have long been afloat, and yet it has not been formed yet. Do you intend to set it up?

[Lebed] There is just a trifle matter here, preventing us from resolving the problem. A pyramid is built correctly if there is just one person at the top.

[Svanidze] You are saying golden words.

[Lebed] But at the top of our pyramid there is a broom — objectively speaking three third forces. So what we have to resolve here is how to cut the number of third forces by three. Then something might work. Consultations and talks are under way. They are

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constructive. We do have a lot in common, but the main stumbling block has not been removed.

[Svanidze] Pardon me asking you this delicate question: who do you think this one person should be?

[Lebed] The situation in the country is such that alongside good breeding, high intellect, good education, the knowledge of economics and jurisprudence, the president must have a quality such as ruthlessness, although it may not be a quality of a particularly civilized person. When we have a system like this, let us not dwell on describing it, a leader must be able to issue a strict order. As we know from experiments on animals and observations of human behavior, a leader must be extremely aggressive on the one hand and on the other hand extremely restrained. He must be able to restrain himself to the last, but if he said that he would cut off someone's head, he will do so. Now why do you not fumble in your own head and decide who suits this role?

[Svanidze] I think you looked at yourself in the mirror this morning. I do not mean the name of my program, but the mirror in which one looks when shaving.

[Lebed] Yes, of course. My face is naturally loving and I have always known it. [laughs]

[Svanidze] In other words, Aleksandr Ivanovich, do I understand you correctly: you are an old soldier and have no knowledge of the language of love. So, you are not intending to enter an alliance with Yavlinskiy unless he recognizes that you are the first?

[Lebed] Do you want to drive a wedge between me and Grigoriy Alekseyevich?

[Svanidze] I do not want you to quarrel. I want to establish the truth.

[Lebed] I have already said that Grigoriy Alekseyevich has all the qualities that I have just listed. If he had run in elections in any civilized European country, no questions would have been asked. But our climate, our atmosphere here is somewhat different. He has problems in this respect.

[Yegor Gaydar, being interviewed by Svanidze] The Moscow conference of Russia's Choice, following prolonged and difficult debates, decided to support the candidacy of Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin in the elections.

[Svanidze] Did any high-ranking official in your party protest against this decision?

[Gaydar] Yes, Sergey Abramovich Kovalev.

[Svanidze] Yegor Timurovich, do you remember a conversation with Yevgeniy Kiselev on the "Itogi" program, I do not remember when precisely, you said that you, for sure, would not support Yeltsin.

[Gaydar] That was in January this year, after the events in Pervomayskoye. Let me remind you what I said in actual fact. Yevgeniy Kiselev asked me whether my breakup with Yeltsin is final and irreversible. I said yes. For me personally this is indeed so. But having considered the actual choice between Yeltsin and the Communists, I think, it would have been an unpardonable mistake to fail to support the only force capable of stopping another communist experiment in Russia.

[Svanidze] Do you indeed believe that after you and Russia's Democratic Choice have made your choice, it will be possible to avoid a split in the democratic movement?

[Gaydar] I do not know what position will be taken by Grigoriy Alekseyevich Yavlinskiy and how his talks will progress. I know one thing: he will face a very serious problem — if in all probability he fails to get into the second round — of what to say to his electorate. [end recording]

[Svanidze] Grigoriy Alekseyevich, I will permit myself to repeat the question of Yegor Timurovich Gaydar, which you have just heard. What will you say to your voters if you fail to get into the second round?

[Yavlinskiy] My main task is to win the presidential elections. My whole work today is connected with this. The preparation of appropriate alliances and agreements is also connected with this, as well as the preparation of the program that will take the country out of the crisis. As for the second round, we will discuss it after the first round. I could mention to you, for instance, a situation in which one will need just one round to win the elections.

[Svanidze] Yes, please.

[Yavlinskiy] If Boris Nikolayevich withdraws his candidacy, something which would be sensible and correct and something which Yegor Timurovich recommended to Boris Nikolayevich six months ago, then we would need no second round.

[Svanidze] If Zyuganov withdraws his candidacy things would be even simpler.

[Yavlinskiy] No. Zyuganov has nothing to do with it. What is at issue are the forces that allegedly oppose Zyuganov: I have Yeltsin in mind. Although in this respect I agree with General Lebed, I can see no difference between them, especially in recent times. I also think that this difference will be increasingly smaller. Soon there will be no difference at all.

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[Svanidze] Grigoriy Alekseyevich, you are quite naturally — and it would have been strange if you had behaved differently — expressing the optimism of a politician who is running in the elections. Nevertheless, the ratings, pardon my using this word, show that your personal chances to win the first round are not great at this moment.

[Yavlinskiy] I have already said once and I want to say it again: our citizens will not vote according to the polls of the Public Opinion Foundation. In the first round at least they will vote according to their own consciences. The situation will then be completely different from the one you are now imagining.

[Svanidze] Grigoriy Alekseyevich, pardon me. This is arguable, but let me remind you of the comments you made in Davos, Switzerland in February, I think. Or was it at the end of January?

[Yavlinskiy] It does not matter.

[Svanidze] At a news conference there, while answering the question why you are better than President Yeltsin, which was asked by a U.S. senator, I think, you said that you were better because your ratings are higher. Your rating was 11 percent while Yeltsin had just 4 percent. Now your rating is lower than Yeltsin's. So, surely, you are now worse than Yeltsin, are you not?

[Yavlinskiy] Had I been in Davos now I would have answered this question in about the same way. But had I been in Ryazan, I would have told people about what is going on in our country — not what they already know. I would have given them a detailed explanation as to why they do not get their wages and pensions, why 70,000 people were killed in Chechnya, why Yeltsin can no longer be considered to be a democratic leader today. Everything would have become clear to people. As for the ratings, I would advise you personally and others not to get carried away today by this arithmetic. It is very dangerous. Kravchuk, Valesa, Kebich, Russia's Choice, and Our Home is Russia had such ratings, but in reality things proved to be completely different.

[Svanidze] So, you say one thing here and something completely different abroad?

[Yavlinskiy] If you like.

[Svanidze] All right, perhaps you have got a point here. Abroad they are interested in things in which we are not interested here. But I would like to ask you a question in which everybody, myself included, is interested. This is a question about the third force.

[Yavlinskiy] There is no third force.

[Svanidze] Will there be?

[Yavlinskiy] No, there will not be, because there are just two forces: one is represented by Yeltsin and Zyuganov who want to hold negotiations, as far as you know. The other force is represented by those who are against the way things are developing today and against the way they were yesterday and the day before yesterday and 50 to 60 years ago. So, there are just two forces. I have just told you that we represent the majority of citizens in our country — these support neither Communists nor Yeltsin. Most citizens in our country have these sentiments. As for the way this third force will be built — I have in mind the pyramid that has been mentioned.

[Svanidze] To specify the question, we want to know about your possible alliance with Lebed and Fedorov.

[Yavlinskiy] I wish to tell you that the points of contact we have found so far permit me to be very optimistic about further developments. We all must understand that when the three people talk — when I have an opportunity to talk with Aleksandr Ivanovich and Svyatoslav Nikolayevich we do not discuss posts. We discuss completely different issues. We discuss the matter of creating a team of honest, professional, and up-to-date politicians who can put the country right and who have citizens' trust, and we take this cause to the electorate. It is not a matter of who will be the first today, but how we will respond to our electorate at the moment when we have to make a decision. The four months of our working together permit me to say that none of us has broken any of our agreements even once in this time. The four months of our working together show that we can rely on each other. Can you name any people at this level who are able to rely on each other, whereas we can. I assure you we will find a solution to this problem. Right up until now I have no reason to worry.

[Svanidze] Grigoriy Alekseyevich, it is remarkable that you have such good friends and what you have said about your relationship with the electorate is also completely normal political rhetoric, which is used by each presidential candidate within his ability and educational level. My question is more specific. You have heard Aleksandr Ivanovich Lebed saying that there must be just one leader while now there are three. I ask you, do you intend to prove to Lebed that you are more aggressive than he is or do you intend to give way to him?

[Yavlinskiy] We will not be proving anything to anybody. We will be ruled by the interests of our cause in resolving this problem. We are not friends, as you put it, we do not drink together in a bar. We are creating a team of political fellow-thinkers at the level of leaders.

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[Svanidze] But there must be just one leader. Lebed said it — just one leader.

[Yavlinskiy] I will say it again. I have known this without Lebed, and everybody knows it. My reply is this: we will resolve this issue at the point when we regard it to be in our strategic interest.

[Svanidze] How will you decide this?

[Yavlinskiy] And how people resolve such questions. We will sit down, shake hands, and reach a solution.

[Svanidze] You will tell Lebed that you are more aggressive than he is?

[Yavlinskiy] I would propose to you that you should discuss a different issue — the three of us are just starting our campaign. Boris Nikolayevich, for instance, has completed his election campaign.

[Svanidze] Why has he completed it?

[Yavlinskiy] He has already played all his trump cards. He has established peace in Chechnya, as far as he could, paid the wage debt, as far he could, reunified the USSP, as far as he could. Effectively he has nothing more to offer, while we are just starting our election campaign. We intend to propose to our citizens how to increase pensions, how to change the wage situation, how to take the country out of the crisis, and how to resolve the issue of refugees and the army. In other words, we will focus on how.

[Svanidze] So, when do you intend to propose all this? We are waiting impatiently. When will you propose all this? Will you make your proposals separately or together? Will you put forward a single candidate?

[Yavlinskiy] Nikolay Karlovich, I am asking you to have patience. Do not worry, pull yourself together.

[Svanidze] It is difficult now. Elections will be held soon.

[Yavlinskiy] Take some herbal tranquillizer. It will help you not to worry.

[Svanidze] So everybody has to have patience because there will be one candidate.

[Yavlinskiy] I do not know about everybody. We will have a chat about this with our voters. I advise you personally...

[Svanidze, interrupting] I am also a voter.

[Yavlinskiy] All right but you are not our voter. So you have nothing to worry about. As for our voters, we are telling them that all the main problems will be resolved. At present there is no doubt about it.

[Svanidze] All right. I wish you good luck but I wish to remind you once more that your electorate is worried.

[Yavlinskiy] I have understood.

[Svanidze] Thank you.

[Yavlinskiy] Thank you.

Russia: Lebed Warns of 'Chaos' Under Communists

MM2904081996 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 25 Apr 96 p 2

[Article by (candidate for the Russian Federation presidency) Aleksandr Lebed: "The New Reds"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Nowadays communists are fond of crossing themselves and saying that their ideology consists of Christian values. But Reagan too used to cite the Christian religion when calling for communism to be consigned to the garbage heap of history. I am probably not as much of a churchgoer as Zyuganov, but I know that the gospels and the Old Testament are holy books from which no political or social system is directly derived. All parties can cite religious authorities and argue themselves hoarse trying to establish which of them interprets the primary sources most accurately.

So let us leave God out of it and not exploit religion in our games. There is something else interesting here: The eternal desire not to speak for yourself but to align yourself with someone else. With "common human values" or with the holy scriptures. That is what happens when you do not believe in yourself, in your ideology, and you are ashamed of your own origins.

The first communists were not ashamed of their beliefs. Try as they might to tell us that when he was in exile Lenin was simply having a vacation at government expense, it is nonsense, of course. Lenin believed fanatically in his ideology (or science, or religion, call it what you will). It was for their beliefs that people like Dzerzhinskiy went to the labor camps or the scaffold. So the first communists were similar to the first Christians. Their strength was in their faith. That is why they succeeded. To use the words of the gospel, the first communists preached like people in power, and not like scribes and Pharisees.

It is decades now since that faith was destroyed and was not replaced by anything. For decades pharisees stood at the head of the party and they stand there still. At the last CPSU congress, the 28th, I asked then chief party ideologist A. Yakovlev: "How many faces do you have?" I never heard an answer, of course. But the current leaders of the CPRF are essentially no different. They are using the old sign in the hope of attracting

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the votes of those who had a better life "under the communists," but there is nothing behind that sign.

It is hard to condemn these politicians for not believing themselves in communist dogma. The destruction of private ownership, proletarian internationalism, the dictatorship of the proletariat, "proletarians of all countries, unite!" In fact, people in Russia today cannot bring themselves to say this kind of thing seriously. But if communist politicians honestly admit that their ideology is dead (dead a very long time ago), what do they have left, aside from a naked desire for power? So they have to be hypocritical, keep their heads down, and scurry past the old portraits of the founding fathers and clumsily cross themselves, trying to remember how it is done — from left to right or from right to left.

But since they do not believe in their own communism, who are they in fact, the communists' leaders?

There are two answers.

Some say that our communists are social democrats. Others assure us that they are national socialists, fascists basically.

I think both are nonsense.

I am sorry, but social democracy does not suit our climate. Russia is not Sweden. It is a little larger. And I would advise you not to take all the chatter about "Swedish models" seriously. Buy a Volvo if you can, but other Swedish models will not settle in our latitudes.

Do you see where the social democrats rule? Where social democracy triumphs in reality, not in theory?

In rich, prosperous, developed, and small European countries. They were like that — well fed, clean, and tidy — before the social democrats came. It is on the basis of existing living standards and levels of social relations that they are building their social democratic paradise — straitjacketing everyone with very high taxes, worrying about the rights of lesbians and emigres, paying unemployment benefits that are higher than wages, and doing a mass of other things that make the local populace groan. That is, the social democrats are adept at sharing out — and they share it out with a human, sometimes idiotic smile, so that no one gets offended.

Is this relevant to Russia today? What have we to share out? There is not enough to go round.

The authorities must give working people the opportunity to work — to do real work, to pursue their professions, and not shuttle back and forth like impecunious traders to such oases of civilization as Turkey and Hong Kong, bringing in all manner of dross from there. Let us do the work, let us earn. Do an honest job and earn proper money: That is what the people expect of the authorities. Truly a communist slogan: From each according to his abilities, to each according to his labor. But it is when Russia gets on with some real work instead of rushing to the barricades and flea markets, when the people have attained their full earning power, and not for communism or for the state, but everyone for himself — that is when we will get rich. When we have made enough, that will be the time to share it out. Then the sharers will come running. We will not have to wait long for them. Their hour will have come, they will be in power. Meanwhile, we have to create.

Obviously we cannot treat the weak, the old, and invalids in a boorish manner; no one has the right to abandon them. Certainly we must help them to live like human beings. But that is not social democracy. Even 200 years ago we did not abandon old people in the countryside to starve to death.

What Russia desperately needs today is authorities who provide scope for honest labor and do not apply a tax straitjacket to provide juicy benefits for layabouts. Strict authority to rein in the mayhem, not a preoccupation with emigres and sexual minorities — that is what Russia needs, that is what Russia expects.

So social democracy is somehow out of place for us. Indeed, I must admit that I do not believe in our communists' "social; democratic creed." They are not your sentimental Swedish professors. Our communist nomenklatura has its feet on the ground and social democratic illusions do not interest it.

As for national socialism, there is nothing to say here. What do you talk about with admirers of fascism? Let the prosecutor talk with them. But no matter how much hot air the professional antifascists generate, this problem does not exist in Russia. There are provocateurs, riffraff wearing swastikas, and that is all. We Russians can be accused of many things, but chauvinism is not among them. If our most nationalist party is headed by Vladimir Volfovich, we are strange nationalists.

No, we are not going to pin that label as well on the communists.

You do not have to make things complicated to show how educated you are. It is the CPRF nomenklatura that we all recognize, that we know as if they were family. The normal party bureaucracy, which was somewhat pushed into the background when their colleagues were distributing power and "privatizing" state property. The younger, unlucky, but voracious kid brothers of the current authorities — there you have the entire "communist opposition." There are facts to support this. Valentin Kovalev was deputy chairman of the State Duma represent-

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ing the CPRF. Yeltsin appointed him justice minister. So there was one communist among the "dozen capitalist ministers." What of it? Absolutely nothing. He was no different from all the others. Federation Council Chairman Stroyev is a former member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo. He is equidistant from Yeltsin and from the CPRF. He was one of the communists' top people, he is one of the current authorities' top people, and he will be one of the CPRF authorities' top people if Zyuganov becomes president. I am not saying that as a criticism. Stroyev did not even need to changes his ideas, ideology or behavior, because all these authorities are indistinguishable from one another. Different types of the same authority —the good old communist nomenklatura.

So the stark confrontation which both the president's team and the communists are keen to portray is largely an invention. It serves the communists well to show their opposition — otherwise who would vote for them? It is important for the president to show that he is the mainstay against the threat of communism. Otherwise how does he attract votes? But basically it is a game.

Of course, it is nearly the same all over the world. What is the difference between the Republicans and Democrats in the United States? Well, it is probably no greater than that between the CPRF nomenklatura and the Kremlin nomenklatura. Yet they fight, and how. But when these political games are played in a normal society in which a man can work and earn money, then it is like football. The fans enthuse, the rest don't give a damn. At any rate, in such a country I would quietly serve in the army and not get involved in politics. Here things are different.

Life is disorganized, people cannot work normally, indeed they are afraid even to live. In the situation the CPRF nomenklatura, against its will, could arouse by the very fact of its coming to power the kind of emotions, the kind of hopes that will take a great deal of bloodshed to douse, I fear. The weaker the authority, the greater the bloodshed. And CPRF authority will be weak, its leaders will be hidebound apparatchiks, although many will be aggressive.

The CPRF nomenklatura is hoping to be able to fool its naive electorate and basically leave the present stagnation unchanged, simply taking up key positions within it. But many people with grievances, voting for them, will expect real, not fake revenge. And if the CPRF comes to power they will call in the iou's. Take Anpilov: Under "his" president, Zyuganov, who will be obligated to him, he is not going put up with what he has had to swallow under an "alien" president, Yeltsin. At the moment the communists are apparently united. If they come to power they will immediately be "free" and the major chaos will begin. It will be exactly according to Lenin: The communist leadership will no longer be able to run things in the old way and the grassroots communists will no longer want to live in the old way. For those of you who have forgotten, let me remind you: That was how Lenin defined a revolutionary situation.

And there is no need to explain what revolution would mean for Russia today.

So the communists could start a fire against their will that would engulf us all.

What follows from this? That we should put up with the ruling regime, with the current stagnation, as the lesser of two evils?

That is a typical argument. Of course, if I thought like that I would not be involved in the presidential race.

Russia: Deputy Asks Zyuganov To Withdraw From Presidential Race

LD2604205096 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1941 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, April 26 (Itar-Tass) — Duma MP Konstantin Borovoy addressed an open letter to communist leader Gennadiy Zyuganov today, asking him to withdraw from the forthcoming presidential elections. This letter was circulated in the lower house of the Russian parliament on Friday.

"We both realize that a return to a communist regime in Russia is impossible — neither citizens, nor the present authorities, nor the world community will let that happen," Borovoy said in his letter. "On the other hand, the present situation is absolutely unacceptable for the majority of Russian citizens and forces really opposing the present regime, i.e. all the existing parties," the letter said.

"There is only one way to resolve this problem — only a leader of a non-communist party of the opposition can become Russian president," Borovoy said. Therefore, he asked Gennadiy Zyuganov to withdraw his candidature in favor of presidential candidate from "Yabloko" faction Grigoriy Yavlinskiy.

Zyuganov, currently making a tour of Russian cities during his canvassing campaign, learned about Borovoy's letter from Itar-Tass correspondent in Novgorod.

"I do not know such a politician as Borovoy," Zyuganov replied, saying that he has nothing more to add to his commentary.

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Russia: Chubays Urges Yabloko Leader To Renounce Presidential Bid

LD2804134796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1226 GMT 28 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 28 (Interfax) — Anatoliy Chubays, former first deputy prime minister and a leader of the Russia's Democratic Choice party, has urged Yabloko movement leader and presidential candidate Grigoriy Yavlinskiy to withdraw his candidacy and join the team supporting President Boris Yeltsin's re-election for a second term.

"It is absolutely obvious that Yavlinskiy will not become Russian president in June," Chubays said at a session of the Russia's Democratic Choice party's Moscow branch on April 27. "All votes cast in favor of Yavlinskiy in the first round [of the June 16 presidential elections] will be votes working for [Communist Party Chairman] Gennadiy Zyuganov and the Communists," he said.

Chubays said he believed that "what Yeltsin will become after the presidential elections depends on who supports him." "I am in favor of Yeltsin standing together with [human rights campaigner] Sergey Kovalyov and [Russia's Democratic Choice Chairman] Yegor Gaydar," he said.

"If we do not support the incumbent president, we will have to assume responsibility for the rise to power of the national socialists in the country which possesses nuclear weapons," Gaydar said during the same conference.

When asked why he did not see Yavlinskiy as a "perfect" candidate, Gaydar said the Yabloko leader "ensured the split among the democrats in 1993 and 1995 and our common defeat in the elections." "This is his most serious achievement during the last few years," Gaydar said.

"The threat of a Communist victory is real in the highest degree," said Gaydar.

Russia: Commission Registers Three Presidential Candidates

LD2604133596 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1300 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Our special correspondent reports that the Central Electoral Commission today registered Vladimir Bryntsalov, Yuriy Vlasov, and Aman Tuleyev as presidential candidates. The Central Electoral Commission refused registration to Galina Starovoytova, Vyacheslav Ushakov, and Lev Ubozhko.

Russia: Bryntsalov To Form Socialist Party

964F1957A Moscow KURANTY in Russian 16 Apr 96 p 4

[Interview with Vladimir Bryntsalov, head of the FAO Fereyn, by Aleksandr Sadchikov; place and date not given: "I Want To Be President Anyway. The Unregistered Candidate is Confident of His Success"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The head of the FAO [Pharmaceutical Joint-Stock Company] Fereyn was born in 1946 in the city of Cherkessk in Stavropol Kray. He is considered to be one of the richest people in Russia. He is married, he has a daughter from his first marriage, and from his second—a son Aleksey and a daughter Alena. He lives in the village of Saltykov in Balashinkhinskiy Rayon in Moscow Oblast.

[Sadchikov] Vladimir Alekseyevich, how would you comment on the situation that has developed?

[Bryntsalov] I must note that in addition to the executive, legislative, and judicial branches and the press, which I consider to be the fourth branch, there is also a fifth branch of power—the Central Electoral Commission. If we follow this idea through we must admit that there is also a sixth—the Procuracy, which also asserts that its decisions have the force of law. As for me, they gave me this mandate—there is no way to avoid it.

We have fools in power, and they do everything they can do not to lose it. There is a rule: It is easy gain power, it is difficult to keep it. Power is retained by legitimate methods: compliance with the laws, the Constitution, citizens' rights. It is not important whether they are rich or poor—the rights of every citizen must be observed and a decision of any court is binding for the authorities. This is why the Central Electoral Commission had to give me a mandate, and then protest this decision, speak about the imperfections in the law, give justifications, and so forth. Whether the law is good or bad is another matter, it exists and it must be executed—the decision of the Supreme Court was final and not subject to appeal. I do not need the presidency, I need a mandate, and if I receive it, just let them try to take it away from me...

[Sadchikov] But if they do not give it to you?

[Bryntsalov] They will. And if they do not, there will be no elections, there will be no president. I sent a telegram to the current president but he did not answer. A president must listen to the country's breathing, know what is happening in it, and protect the downtrodden. He must put aside everything and protect the downtrodden. I appeal to him: Dear friend, help! I have already helped him many times.

[Sadchikov] How, for example?

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[Bryntsalov] We participated in all the demonstrations in support of Yeltsin during 1991-1993. We voted for him many times and joined Rybkin's bloc—after all, that was essentially the president's bloc. For example, I did not need that association. I understand that the current authorities are poor, that they have not learned anything yet, that they do not have enough money and they have many thieves, and that it is not a simple matter to change from communist thinking to normal thinking. If the procurator general says that he cannot carry out a decision of the Supreme Court, what kind of a procurator is he?

[Sadchikov] What is your ultimate goal: to become president or to see the law triumph?

[Bryntsalov] Of course I want to become president. How I can derive maximum advantage from this situation—which is what any person wants—is another question. My advantage is to push through my program. Of course, it would simpler if Boris Nikolayevich were to adopt it, but he does not want to listen to me. And because of this I guarantee you that Yeltsin could lose 10 million votes. We will find somebody to support.

[Sadchikov] Where will you look if the second round includes Yeltsin and Zyuganov? Will you really support the Communists?

[Bryntsalov] Let me say this about the Communists: There was the CPSU—a strong and powerful organization of a great country. Whether it operated correctly or not, it was strong and powerful, and now it no longer exists—all that is left is a big mess. In my struggle for a deputy mandate I did not encounter any resistance from the Communists. The people are voting not for the Communists but against what is happening now.

But the elections are still a long way off and I am looking out only for myself since I want to enter on this path. Yes, now I am a Yeltsin supporter, but if they do not register me I could possibly change my mind. I have always been bothered by economic interests in politics. Neither Yeltsin nor Zyuganov is my enemy. They are partners. We are all former Communists: Yeltsin was more successful, I was less so, and Zyuganov was not successful at all. Therefore we are responsible for what happened in the country.

True, I was driven out of the Communist Party back in 1979 "for petty bourgeois tendencies," but I will not try to base my program either on a criticism of Yeltsin or on a criticism of Zyuganov.

I will focus on my own good qualities. I am young, strong, I have a good wife, children, money, I have created that, this I can do. Why should I criticize anyone? In 1980 I said to the Communists: Open up a chink for the people, at least give them some political and economic freedoms, and the people will follow you. They did not listen to me... The logic of the Communists has always surprised me. When they said they were concerned about the people, I responded—be concerned about yourself first so that you look good. I could never support the Communists no matter how I related to Boris Nikolayevich, no matter how angry I was that the Central Election Commission would not open up the path to the presidency to me.

[Sadchikov] Is it true that you offered $10 million for the opportunity to head up the Communist Party of Russia?

[Bryntsalov] I did, but this party cannot be reformed. For example, it is impossible to create a normal socialist party out of it. Zyuganov does not want to do this and there are forces that will not allow him to. Neither Makashov nor Kuptsov nor Sevasyanov want this, all they want to do is sing "The International." We must forget that song (we are not internationalists!) and begin to think only about ourselves. I am not saying that we must become nationalists, but we must be concerned about our homeland, about our people, but we are always concerned about other peoples. We do not need this—let us live well ourselves.

[Sadchikov] In order to live well you need a good program. What are you offering your constituents? What are the basic aspects of your program?

[Bryntsalov] I have a socialist program. I say that our state must have capitalist production relations and a socialist state. Capitalist production relations produce the greatest effect—product quality is better, labor productivity is higher. And there is the element of exploitation. But here a socialist government says: Give wages to the worker, be concerned about him. But we have it the other way around: First collect taxes from us, the entrepreneurs, and then force us to pay the workers, but we have nothing left. Imagine how stupid that is.

A socialist government must make the managers first of all pay the workers, and then let them pay taxes to the government and buy goods. But now we are paralyzed. The government interacts with the banks and the enterprises but the people get nothing.

[Sadchikov] In your pre-election promises you say that if you win every Russian will receive a minimum wage of $1,000. How can you do this and where will you get the reserves for this?

[Bryntsalov] It is very simple to do that—adopt a minimum wage law, if only at the level of the average for the country. And no additional reserves would be necessary for a wage of $1,000. There is a simple

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method. The Central Bank is now playing on increasing the exchange rate of the dollar—it is supporting the exporter. If the dollar is not supported, it will be destroyed—in three months we will be paying R1,000 for a dollar. An expensive dollar is not advantageous to us; we import equipment, know-how, and so forth. In principle we need to reorient the economy for the next two or three years toward light industry, agriculture, and space research. Why is this not happening? The IMF will not give our government the go-ahead to reduce the dollar. Perhaps I am not experienced in politics, but I am experienced in economics. In the government we see individuals who do not understand anything about economics. I used to be a red capitalist and then I became a black one. Neither Kadannikov nor Gaydar nor Chubays has ever been a capitalist.

If we do not return the population's savings there will never be any economy. The basis of the market is the population's savings, which are lying in the banks, and the banks control the movement of the money. The right to work must be guaranteed by the receipt of wages for work.

At the FAO Fereyn our average wage is $800, and the minimum—R1.5 million. This, of course, is not enough. I am simply forced to steal money from my people, which I openly admit. We have 14,500 people working for us. I pay them $800. They are underpaid on average $1,200. I take approximately $16 million a month away from them. The workers are satisfied, the government too—and how: I pay well! In fact, this is thievery. I should be paying the worker $2,000 and the government should be taking 30 percent, approximately $600, for itself in the form of taxes. He should put $100 in the bank, he should transfer $100 to the Pension Fund, and we should pay a lot for an apartment so that the people who live there will do a good job. This will never happen until we change our methods of managing the state. Our capitalism is distinguished from the Western type by the fact that there the buyer is in charge and here the government is.

[Sadchikov] Do you intend somehow to extend the material position of workers of the FAO Fereyn to your constituents who live in Orekhovo-Zuyevskiy Electoral District No. 111?

[Bryntsalov] Nothing would come of it. And this is not my function. As a politician I must create certain rules for everyone. A working man must feed himself. Now he cannot do that, so who will we have to create good products later? That is why I pay $800: If I pay less, the commodity will not be as good. I pay the minimum that enables me to maintain my product's reputation. I have already outgrown Orekhovo-Zuyev, I could run in Cherkessk and win, I could in Moscow... If they listen to me, it will be to the entire country's advantage, including my own. If they do not, I will fight to the end.

[Sadchikov] That is economics, but what prospects do you see for yourself as a politician?

[Bryntsalov] I know that if nothing happens with the presidential elections, I will not leave politics. On 27 April we will register the Russian Socialist Party, whose objective is the same as that of other parties—to win power. How will we operate? In the year 2000 we will enter 450 candidates in the parliamentary elections and try to win a majority in parliament. Then we will change the Constitution: The party that wins the elections will form the government and we will curtail the rights of the president, who should not stick his nose in the affairs of government or in the economy, and I would have to make sure that the laws are obeyed. I feel that I am simply obligated as a citizen to participate in this process. Then I have more opportunity for this participation—I have more money than the Communist Party does. If you look at my opponents, I am just as good as they are in every way: in sports, in sex, in education, in anything else. I never lacked confidence in myself as a person.

[Sadchikov] You frequently refer to your business colleagues in an unflattering way. What are your relations with them?

[Bryntsalov] I have none. I have had thousands of offers from the "Roundtable" of Russia's business but I do not make contact, they are not businessmen there. Why do I need Shcherbikov, Volskiy, and all the rest of them? Skokov is also in charge of an incomprehensible Union of Commodity Producers. I know what I am—a person who has something, but what they have—I do not know. Whom do they represent? I am not as interested in the businessman as I am in the buyer: I need him.

[Sadchikov] How do you feel about the accusations that you are getting the country drunk by producing cheap vodka?

[Bryntsalov] We produce R200 billion worth of medications a year and the proportion of alcohol in this volume is 3 percent. And we have even closed down that plant. It is not advantageous. Besides the draconian taxes on the hungry workers of the OBKhS [Department for Combating the Embezzlement of State Property]—there was no point in it. It is impossible to sell vodka for R6,000, and if you sell it for R10,000 nobody will buy it. I cannot sell it for R6,000: I have to pay R5,000 for the excise tax. There, incidentally, is another indicator

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for you: We no longer have our own alcohol industry—it has been destroyed. Like everything else. Foreign goods, no money. The fourth world war—trade—will soon come to an end. And we will not win.

[Sadchikov] If you look at today's election campaign not with the eyes of a candidate but from an outsider's viewpoint, what do you think: Is it normal that we have 78 candidates for the post of Chief of State?

[Bryntsalov] I will answer this way: With the current law on elections, this is an abnormal situation—150 million people must think that they can become presidential candidates. With this law which we have created, 78 people is not very many. Every citizen over the age of 35 who has been living in Russia for more than 10 years has the right to run for president—there are 50-75 million such people in our country. Let us come up with a different law and then we can talk about whether or not this is normal. How can we limit the number of people who want to run? First: nomination from political parties. Second: self-nomination. Third: the acting president automatically has a right to enter the second round. The first and third points are clear. But let us consider self- nomination. We could introduce, for example, a property fee—put up $10 million for a deposit: If you garner less than 5-10 percent of the votes, this money will be lost. All of it. If you want to run, put up your money. Well, if a candidate has received two votes, should he be included on the list because of this? This law was conceived by the poor and a poor person is not effective. With a different law we would not have had this abundance of candidates. If a person is not able to pay this sum, I can. I hope everything turns out well now.

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CIS: ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 27 Apr

LD2704084396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0744 GMT 27 Apr 96

["Press Review" — ITAR-TASS headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 27 (ITAR-TASS) — Most leading newspapers publish today an address by major Russian financiers to the two presidential front-runners — Zyuganov and Yeltsin — entitled "Let us come out of the dead-end".

Worried over the growing split in society, bankers call on the conflicting sides to start a dialogue and make a strategic compromise. Commenting on this letter, the KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA newspaper stresses that its authors are leaders of structures which became an inseparable part of the Russian economy.

If they conscientiously choose methods of sabotage as an instrument of pressure, financial flows will be sealed off, and an economic paralysis is inevitable.

Agreeing with the need for a reasonable compromise, the SOVETSKAYA ROSSIA newspaper notes in turn that fear of a civil war or a threat of annihilation of political elites cannot, nevertheless, be an instrument blocking people's will.

"In connection with President Boris Yeltsin's visit to Almaty, Nursultan Nazarbayev told journalists several facts which can be called a sensation," the ROSSIISKAYA GAZETA newspaper writes.

He said that representatives from the Chechen opposition "via Turkey" requested him to participate in a mediation mission at talks with Yeltsin. Secondly, Kazakhstan and Russia will evidently come to agreement on the status of the Caspian.

Thirdly, talks which were conducted for many years on setting up a Caspian pipeline consortium, are nearing completion.

Last but not least, Nazarbayev openly favored, for the first time, Yeltsin's candidacy at the June elections, although he made a traditional reservation that he will respect any choice of the Russian people.

"The telephone right will not influence the prosecutor," Vladimir Kirakozov, a high-ranking official of the Russian Prosecutor-General's Office said in an interview with ROSSIISKAYA GAZETA.

He commented on the situation with the arrests of Mutalibov, a former head of the Azerbaijan Republic, and Kazyev, a former defense minister of Azerbaijan. The extensive interview examines various aspects of the situation which developed in connection with the arrest and extradition of the Azeri political figures.

The IZVESTIA newspaper runs a forecast by Konstantin Borovoy, a prominent financier and the leader of the Economic Freedom Party, on the nearest future of Russia. The author is sure that Zyuganov will carry the coming presidential elections in June and depicts subsequent events in bleak tones.

Borovoy refers to the precision of his previous political forecasts. "I believe that God conceived Zyuganov as the last weakened bacillus of communism for mankind. An inoculation.

"Let Communists come to power in Russia so that they could disappear everywhere and for good," writes Borovoy in conclusion.

An interview given by Vice-President of the Russian Academy of Sciences Yevgeniy Velikhov to ROSSIISKAYA GAZETA on security of nuclear power plants occupies a place of prominence among materials on the Chernobyl topic which continues to draw the attention of the press.

There is no alternative so far to nuclear reactors, the academician claims. "If we continue to build fuel power stations, we shall suffocate the globe." Researchers see the way out in the following: to develop a virtually safe reactor.

Russian, American, German and Japanese researchers have been designing such a reactor since 1988 where an explosion with pernicious discharges is impossible. It is planned to build it by the year 2008. This will signify a new epoch in the power industry, Velikhov believes.

Under the headline "Years have not changed Boris Yeltsin's affection for sport", the ROSSIISKIE VESTI newspaper features an article by Pyotr Vinogradov, deputy chairman of the Russian State Committee for Physical Culture and Tourism, on priorities in the activities of this state committee.

The army daily KRASNAYA ZVEZDA and the Russian Union of Afghanistan veterans put out today the first issue of the Pobratim newspaper. Its sponsors hope that Pobratim will become a mouthpiece for veterans of the Afghan war as well as all other war veterans.

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Russia: Yeltsin Comments on Five-Nation Accord Signed in Shanghai

LD2604115696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1121 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] SHANGHAI, April 26 (Itar-Tass) — The heads of five states — Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan — signed the Agreement on confidence-building measures in the military sphere in the border area here on Friday.

Speaking at the signing ceremony of the five-side document, Russian President Boris Yeltsin noted that the sides "reached a stage which is pivotal for strengthening confidence between our five countries and peoples".

According to Yeltsin, the signed agreement is unique for the entire Asia-Pacific region. Countries of this part of the world shoulder specific obligations in the military-political sphere for the first time: non-use or threat of force against one another, refusal to get unilateral military superiority, non-use of troops (stationed in the area of the border) for an attack on another side, etc.

"We are convinced that implementation of this document will have considerable positive influence on the entire situation in the Asia-Pacific region," the Russian president emphasised.

Russia: Joint Statement Issued on Yeltsin's Visit to China

LD2604140496 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1227 GMT 26 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondent]

[FBIS Translated Text] Beijing, 26 Apr (ITAR-TASS) — During the state visit to China 24-26 April, Russian President Boris Yeltsin held talks with PRC President Jiang Zemin and met with PRC State Council Premier Li Peng and National People's Congress Chairman Qiao Shi. All the talks and meetings took place in a friendly, amicable atmosphere, and in a spirit of mutual respect and trust, says a news statement about the Russian president's visit, released here today.

The document notes that the leaders of Russia and China had a broad, in-depth exchange of views on bilateral relations and international problems of mutual interest. On the basis that Russia and China understand their responsibilities as great powers for the fate of the world, the sides stated their determination to step up practical cooperation and partnership in international affairs, which "is particularly important at a time of difficult transition from a bipolar world structure to a multipolar world, when certain destructive tendencies remain: recurring pressure, the politics of force and new manifestations of bloc politics." The Chinese side stated that "China views Russia's position against NATO expansion eastwards with understanding." Particular attention was paid to Russian-Chinese cooperation on ensuring security in the Asia-Pacific region.

Agreement was reached on holding regular meetings at least once a year between the leaders of Russia and China. For the urgent exchange of views it was decided to establish a communications "hotline" between Moscow and Beijing. A "grand" commission at the level of the two countries' prime ministers is to be set up.

Boris Yeltsin and Jiang Zemin signed a Joint Declaration.

During the Russian president's visit to the PRC the heads of Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan signed an agreement on confidence-building in the military field in border zones. This "fully-fledged military-political document" is to be circulated as a UN document.

The leaders of Russia and China confirmed their adherence to the 1991 and 1994 agreements on the eastern and western parts of the border and stated their intention to complete demarcation work on the eastern part of the border according to an agreed timetable and to embark without delay on demarcation of the western border. An agreement on joint economic exploitation of plots of land which pass to the other side as a result of demarcation will be drawn up and agreed in parallel with demarcation so that the interests of the people living along the border are protected. The sides stated their intention "to take a flexible approach to dealing with specific issues raised by demarcation in a number of sectors." They also stated their intention to intensify their talks on agreeing mutual cuts in armed forces along the border.

In addition to the joint declaration, agreements on cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear power, safeguarding intellectual property, space exploration, and a number of other things were signed during the visit. It was noted that a slump in bilateral trade has been overcome and a trend taken shape toward an increase in trade turnover, which "in the years to come" could reach $20 billion.

The sides advocated further development of links between their armies, border troops, and law enforcement bodies, as well as extending military-technological cooperation "on a mutually advantageous basis taking account of the international obligations of both countries and not to the detriment of the security interests of third states."

The final communique talks about "measures to further improve the situation concerning travel by citizens of

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both countries, labor migration, and combating violations of the law on labor migration."

A reciprocal commitment to ensuring the sociopolitical stability of Russia and China while preserving the territorial integrity and unity of the state was confirmed.

Boris Yeltsin, the communique says, invited Jiang Zemin to make an official visit to Russia.

Russia: Party Leaders Hail Results of Yeltsin Visit to PRC

LD2604154796 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1511 GMT 26 Apr 96

[By Ivan Novikov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 26 (Itar-Tass) — State Duma Security Committee chairman Viktor Ilyukhin, of the communist faction, praised the results of the China visit of President Boris Yeltsin.

"Any international relations only strengthen Russia's positions, and in this respect the visit of the leader of the Russian state to the Chinese People's Republic can be only hailed," Ilyukhin said.

"I think in conditions when NATO says that this bloc will be moving to the Russian walls, Boris Yeltsin by his visit has made it clear that we, Russia, are ready for accord with China to counter-balance what the West is undertaking now, and (that) it (the West) will not succeed in any isolation of Russia," Ilyukhin said.

He said hopes that "the U.S. and Europe will make major financial injections in our country have failed."

"In these circumstances, the present Russian leadership is stepping up the search for reliable economic and trade partners among the Asian states, and this is good," Ilyukhin said.

The leader of the Yabloko bloc and presidential aspirant, Grigoriy Yavlinskiy, said in an interview with Itar-Tass today that he had not so far read the documents signed by Yeltsin in Beijing, but hopes the Russian-Chinese relations will benefit from them.

"Further development and deepening of good neighbourly relations with China would be extremely useful for Russia," he said.

Another presidential candidate, State Duma member Aleksandr Lebed told Itar-Tass that he thought Russia needs to expand its military cooperation with China. If NATO persists in its plan to enlarge eastward, Russia should build up its military cooperation with Asian states, primarily with China, Lebed said.

As for the demarcation of the Russian-Chinese border, Lebed said "Russia has a lot of land, but we must not give it away to anyone so that no precedent is set."

Lebed praised the cooperation initiatives of Boris Yeltsin, reiterating the special priority of the military cooperation.

State Duma International Affairs Committee deputy chairman Anatoliy Andreyev told Itar-Tass that Yeltsin's visit to China had been of exceptional importance for the evolution of the Russian-Chinese relations.

Andreyev, of the Russia is Our Home (NDR) faction, said the visit could bring a certainty to the issue of demarcation of the Russian-Chinese border.

Besides, "China for long years bought various types of weapons from the USSR, and it would be quite useful now to continue the cooperation in this field," Andreyev said.

Finally, the China visit "is a substantial plus for Boris Yeltsin on the eve of the presidential election," he added.

Russia: Expert: Moscow-Beijing Rapprochment May Irritate Washington

LD2604185796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1610 GMT 26 Apr 96

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 26 (Interfax) — Rapprochement between Moscow and Beijing may become an irritating factor in Russian-U.S. relations, Viktor Kremenyuk, Deputy Director of the Institute of the United States and Canada under the Russian Academy of Sciences, told Interfax Friday.

However, he discounted the possibility that Russia and China might form an alliance to counterbalance NATO's expansion eastward.

"There is no reason for Russia to go as far in relations with China as forming a defense union," Kremenyuk said. "Moscow and Beijing still have some territorial differences although they are not officially advertised," he said.

However, the Russian-Chinese Declaration signed in Beijing on Thursday calls for combating "hegemonism," he said, adding that in his opinion this appeal "is quite clearly aimed against NATO and the United States, which is playing the leading part in the alliance."

Rapprochement between Russia and China will irritate the United States because Washington is concerned

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about China's increasingly aggressive position, which has so far shown itself only toward Taiwan, Kremenyuk said. "The United States does not want Moscow to untie Beijing's hands fully," he said.

However, Russian-Chinese rapprochement is unlikely to result in a serious deterioration of Russian-U.S. relations, Kremenyuk said. "Of course, Americans are not very happy about the intensification of military-technological cooperation between Moscow and Beijing, but Washington perfectly realizes the limits of possible rapprochement between Russia and China," he said.

Russia: Yeltsin, Kazakh's Nazarbayev Meet in Almaty

LD2704102796 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0929 GMT 27 Apr 96

[ITAR-TASS correspondents Vladimir Akimov and Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Translated Text] Almaty, 27 April — Nursultan Nazarbayev and Boris Yeltsin, the heads of Kazakhstan and Russia, met privately in the Fireplace Hall of the presidential palace.

Dulat Kuanyshev, press secretary of Kazakhstan's head of state, stated that the two presidents focused mainly on integration problems. Joint documents have been prepared on the use of Caspian Sea resources, Russian participation in the extraction and transport of Kazakhstan's oil and gas; granting additional legal and pension guarantees to Baykonur (formerly Leninsk) citizens, and a number of villages adjacent to Baykonur cosmodrome. After the private meeting, talks will include more participants.

Russia: Japanese Defense Agency Chief Hopes For 'Frank Dialogue'

LD2804142996 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1342 GMT 28 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Varlamov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Aviation base of Kubinka (Moscow Region), 28 Apr — "I hope Russia and Japan will develop a frank dialogue on issues of security, including at the level of the defense departments," Japanese Defense Agency chief Hideo Usui said today in an interview with an ITAR-TASS correspondent. Within the frame work of the start of the official visit of the head of the Japanese defense department to Moscow, first in the history of their bilateral relations, he visited today the Tamanskaya motor rifle division and the aviation base of Kubinka.

The minister said he intends to "actively develop Russo-Japanese ties, and I see my task at the first forthcoming meeting on 29 April with Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev to be that of raising the level of trust between our countries."

Hideo Usui also noted that he intends to discuss with the Russian defense minister issues on military and defense policy of the two countries and also the situation in the Asia-Pacific region.

Russia: Japan Proposes Joint Action for Conflict Prevention

OW2904033096 Tokyo KYODO in English 0312 GMT 29 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, April 29 KYODO — Japanese Defense Agency head Hideo Usui proposed joint bilateral action with Russia on Sunday [28 April] to prevent conflicts and strengthen peace, Japanese officials said.

Usui made the proposal at a dinner hosted by Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev for the visitor, the first meeting of the defense ministers of the two countries.

Usui told Grachev that both countries should jointly contribute to preventing conflicts and establishing peace, the officials said.

Grachev told Usui that Russia wants to deepen friendly ties with neighboring countries, including Japan, stressing Moscow's desire to boost bilateral ties in all aspects.

Usui termed his visit to Russia, the first by Japan's defense minister, "a historical first step," the officials said.

"I would like to lay the cornerstone for improving Japan-Russia relations," he was quoted as saying.

The two defense ministers will hold a formal meeting Monday to discuss such issues as widening bilateral security talks and the military situation in East Asia.

Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto proposed Usui's visit when he met April 19 with Russian President Boris Yeltsin at the Kremlin for a working dinner at the start of a two-day summit on nuclear safety involving the Group of Seven leading industrialized countries.

Earlier Sunday, Usui visited a Russian army division and an air base in Moscow's suburbs in charge of protecting the capital.

Usui inspected tanks and armored vehicles of the elite division and watched demonstration flights by Russian fighters at the air base.

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Russia: Japan Shows Interest in Russian Fighters

OW2904042996 Tokyo KYODO in English 0330 GMT 29 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, April 29 KYODO — Japan plans to start talks with Russia over possible purchase of Russian weapons, in particular its state-of-the-art fighter jets, a Japanese source suggested Monday [29 April].

"We are strongly interested in Russia's most advanced fighters, such as the MiG-29 and Sukhoy Su-27," said the source accompanying Defense Agency chief Hideo Usui's visit to Russia.

It is the first time Japan has shown interest in purchasing Russian arms.

But the source added, "we have no plan at the moment to buy Russian weapons immediately."

The source indicated a strong interest in the Sukhoy plane, saying the design concept and performance of the fighter piques the interest of Japanese defense experts.

The Russian fighter can ascend at a sharper angle than the U.S.-made F-15 fighter, the mainstay model for the Japanese Air Self-Defense Force, the source noted, saying the Russian fighter could boost Japan's air defense capability.

Usui himself said Sunday that the issue will be discussed at the working level.

But the outlook for Russia to find a new customer in Japan for its military exports, one of its principal sources of hard currency, is not necessarily all that bright.

Japanese Government policies on arms exports prohibit transfer of Japanese military technology to foreign countries except for the United States, which could become necessary to retool Russian weapons to Japanese needs.

Tokyo would also have to heed Washington's opinions in any moves toward arms business with Russia.

Russia: Grachev Begins Talks With Japanese Military Delegation

LD2904083296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0801 GMT 29 Apr 96

[By Andrey Varlamov and Mikhail Shevtsov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 29 (Itar-Tass) — The first talks in the history of Russo-Japanese relations between the heads of the defence establishments of the two countries began here today. A joint protocol is expected to be signed on the results of the meeting. The sides will most likely note in it the importance of the fact that the dialogue on defence and security was raised to the level of ministers, and will express their intention to continue and promote such contacts.

Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev and Chief of the National Defence Agency of Japan Hideo Ushui, who is currently paying the first-ever official visit to the Russian capital, plans to discuss the problem of promoting trust-building measures between the armed forces of the two countries.

Ushui, who visited the Taman Motorised Infantry Division and the Kubinka Air Base on Sunday, told Itar-Tass that he would also like to raise several problems linked with regional security.

It is not ruled out that the ministers may also touch on technological cooperation between the two establishments, since Ushui had expressed great interest the day before in some models of the latest Russian armaments, especially in Su-27 and Mi-29 fighters. Asked whether Japan would buy Russian military technologies, Ushui said that this question could be discussed at working level in the future.

Russia: Primakov Arrives in Bucharest for Black Sea Meeting

LD2704104296 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0951 GMT 27 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Nikolay Morozov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bucharest, 27 Apr — Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov arrived here today to take part in the seventh meeting of foreign ministers of Black Sea Economic Cooperation Zone member countries. It is the Russian foreign minister's first visit to Romania.

At the forum of Black Sea countries the head of Russia's diplomacy will hold talks with his counterparts, put forward a number of initiatives and take over the chairmanship from Romania of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Zone for the next six months.

"I have not come here only to meet the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Zone foreign ministers," the Russian foreign minister stated in an interview with an ITAR-TASS correspondent at Otopeni airport. As for "the initialling of a political treaty (ITAR-TASS: between the Russian Federation and Romania), it depends on the Romanian side," Primakov emphasized.

From the airport the Russian foreign minister set off for the parliament building, where the seventh meeting of foreign ministers of Black Sea Economic Cooperation Zone member countries is to open.

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Russia: Moscow Hails PLO Withdrawal of Israel Destruction Call

LD2604161096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1438 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 26 (Interfax) — Russia hails the decision taken by the session of the Palestinian National Council to withdraw provisions calling for the destruction of Israel from the PLO program document — the Palestinian Charter —, says the Russian Foreign Ministry statement handed over to Interfax by a ministry representative on Friday.

The decision "is a new important step towards further peace processes in the Middle East," says the document.

"It was taken at the moment when the region is in an acute dramatic situation caused by the military operations in Lebanon," says the statement. "Despite this, a balanced, realistic line in support of the political course pursued by Yasir 'Arafat to advance the peace dialogue with Israel has prevailed at the National Council of Palestine."

The statement says that the position of the PLO supreme body will undoubtedly serve the creation of a more favorable atmosphere for the beginning of talks, within the period agreed upon between the two sides (from May 4 this year) on the final status of the Palestinian territories.

The representative expressed the hope that "soon there will be positive shifts also in other directions of the Middle East peace process, first of all, in the Syrian and the Lebanese sections."

"We proceed from the fact that the current efforts to normalize the situation in Lebanon and around it will help relax the present acute situation in the region and open the way for a comprehensive Arab-Israeli settlement," said the diplomat.

Russia: Seleznev: Duma May Oppose Ratification of START II

LD2604205796 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1802 GMT 26 Apr 96

[By Mikhail Kalmykov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] STRASBOURG, April 26 (Itar-Tass) — State Duma Chairman Gennadiy Seleznev told a news conference in Strasbourg on Friday that "the Russian president and both houses of the Russian parliament have a common approach to the problem of NATO's expansion — we do not approve of it."

Seleznev was in Strasbourg attending a session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

The fact that this problem has recently been intensively discussed in the West might raise doubts about prospects for the ratification of the START-2 treaty, Seleznev said. When the Russian and US presidents signed this treaty, there was no problem of NATO's expansion on the agenda. Now, Russian MPs raise a lot of questions in connection with this prospect. The State Duma has already had five sittings, with some of them held behind closed doors, when doubts were voiced. I do not rule out that when this document will be submitted to MPs for ratification, it might not be ratified for a simple reason that two many countries are knocking too hard at NATO's doors today.

Every country is free to choose to which bloc it should belong. But there is no country to which we said that its accession to NATO might hamper the development of political and economic relations, Seleznev said. He pointed out that after the two military blocs had played their historic role and one of them became part of history, the Russian society was concerned over the fact that the other bloc was actively developing.

Russia seeks to develop the idea of OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] with a new system of security without military blocs. In this respect, "I support the idea voiced by chairman of the Ukrainian parliament Oleksandr Moroz who suggested to convene a big European conference in two years time similar to the Helsinki conference to discuss prospects for European security in the next century, taking into account the radically changed situation," the speaker said.

Russia: Paris Club Decision 'Expression of Support' for Reforms

MM2604124896 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 26 Apr 96 p 1

[Report by Aleksandr Anichkin: "Paris Installment Plan in Support of Russian Reforms"]

[FBIS Translated Text] This week the Paris Club adopted a decision that will impact on everything in our country — from regular payment of wages to the pace at which industry emerges from the slump.

This romantic sounding name hides a very serious forum, where creditor governments conduct negotiations with debtor governments. The Paris Club is an informal association, it has no permanent membership or organizational structures, but the results of negotiations there have a tremendous effect on the world economy. The club's current session that began Thursday [25 April] in Paris, naturally enough, is devoted to restructuring, in other words to rescheduling the payment of Russia's

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debt to Western countries. This debt stands at $40 billion.

The need for rescheduling is due primarily to Russia's obvious inability to pay these debts now. Especially since the country has taken on the former USSR's debts. According to current information, which has not been confirmed by official spokesmen, a framework agreement will be concluded at the Paris Club meeting. Russia will be given, first, a 20-year installment plan to pay off the debt, and second, a six-year deferral — before it starts paying off the debt.

The London Club, where, unlike the Paris Club, private creditors — commercial banks — meet with debtor governments, had previously decided to reschedule the Russian debt over 25 years.

The meeting of the Paris Club is taking place amidst the West's growing confidence in Russia's economic policy. One of the most significant signs of this was the decision to grant an extended IMF loan of $10 billion. Authoritative experts predict stabilization and an economic boom in Russia over the next few years. That was the opinion voiced in the IMF's latest annual report on the state of the world economy, published last week, and in the economic review of Europe published by the EU this week in Geneva. The debt rescheduling will give the Russian economy the time needed for a running start.

The Paris Club's decision is thus less of an enforced concession to a hopeless debtor than yet another expression of support of the reform course of the last few years.

Russia: Russia, Paris Club Agree To Debt Rescheduling

LD2904060196 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0404 GMT 29 Apr 96

[By Nikita Yermakov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] PARIS April 29 (Itar-Tass) - Russia and the creditor countries, grouped together in the Paris Club, signed an agreement here on Sunday night to reschedule Russia's foreign debt, Russian sources have told Itar-Tass.

The contents of the Agreement were not immediately known. The debt-rescheduling talks began last Thursday and were held in an atmosphere of confidentiality.

Details of the Agreement are expected to become known when Vice-Premier Oleg Davydov, who leads the Russian delegation, will give a press conference here on Monday.

Russia: Zhirinovskiy Threatens To 'Stamp Out' Baltics

WS2604133296 Tallinn BNS in English 1316 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tallinn, Apr 26, BNS — The leader of Russia's ultra-nationalist Liberal Democratic Party Vladimir Zhirinovskiy has again said he will force the Baltics back under Moscow's rule if he becomes president.

"I tell you frankly that I will do everything to stamp out the Baltic states," he said in an interview with Estonia's Postimees newspaper. "I say this publicly in order to avoid ungrounded accusations later."

Zhirinovskiy, who is number 3-4 in popularity polls in the run-up to the Russian presidential elections, said the Baltics needed to be taken so that Russia could win broader access to the Baltic Sea. "You are standing on our way to the sea ports," he told the Estonian newspaper.

He said the West is unlikely to protest against the eradication of the Baltics from the world political map. "You will be abolished as a subject of international relations," he said. "At the same time it should be clear that Russia won't use a direct attack to conquer the Baltics."

Zhirinovskiy said his designs for Estonia included organizing riots by criminals. "I tell them (prisoners) that they will be free if they move themselves a little in Tallinn," he said. "And they will move themselves, by burning down a few streets."

Zhirinovskiy predicted that in case of a Communist victory, Communist parties will be set up anew in the Baltics and the one in Estonia will be headed by current parliament Vice Speaker Arnold Ruutel, the former Communist parliamentary leader during whose term Estonia regained its independence from the Soviet Union.

Russia: Baburin News Conference on Russians in Crimea

MK2604130096 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Apr 96 p 3

[NEGA report]

[FBIS Translated Text] The chairman of the Russian All-People's Union, Sergey Baburin, thinks the Russian and Russian-speaking population of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea are citizens of Russia. He stated

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in his press conference at the State Duma that "no law provided for changing the citizenship of Crimea's inhabitants at the moment of the transfer of Crimea Oblast to Ukraine's jurisdiction." Considering the fact that Crimeans, USSR citizens in the past, never indicated their will to either decline Russian Federation citizenship or become citizens of Ukraine, the Russian Federation's duty under the Constitution is to protect the rights and freedoms of inhabitants of Crimea and to grant them citizenship of the Russian Federation, and to resume the operations of the Russian consulate group on the territory of Crimea.

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Political Issues

Russia: Zyuganov Interviewed on Land Law, Clinton Meeting

LD2704113696 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0745 GMT 27 Apr 96

[Interview with Gennadiy Zyuganov, Leader of Communist Party by an unidentified correspondent in the "Factions' Tribunal" section of the "Parliamentary Week" program, place and date not given — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Begin recording] [Correspondent] How do you assess the Communist faction's work in the State Duma during its first 100 days?

[Zyuganov] First of all, we've managed to ensure that the Duma operates properly. It hasn't got bogged down allocating committee jobs. We've drawn up a full legislative program.

A big success, I think, was the adoption of a Land Code that makes it possible to supervise land deals and prevents the squandering of agricultural land. At the same time the Land Code allows individuals to dispose of their own plots of land used as gardens, allotments, or for building houses. This was a particularly important move, because it prevents attempts to destabilize the situation. If we start selling off agricultural land, then we'll lose the whole country tomorrow. We managed to get the law....

[Correspondent interrupts] Some people think that the law breaches the constitutional right of citizens to own land and to not only lease it but dispose it of as they see fit and in particular sell it.

[Zyuganov] As far as agricultural land is concerned, it was decided lifelong leases, should anyone wish to do that, with the right to transfer it as well.

[Correspondent] But without the right to sell it?

[Zyuganov] Without the right to sell. This applies to agricultural land. But if you've got a garden, or allotment, or a dacha, or a plot of land, then you're entitled to dispose of it and sell it. This kind of rule exists in almost every developed country. It's a very well-judged rule. It suits the state-sector farmer, the private farmer, and everyone who wants to work the land. This guards against our being taken advantage of by selling our land for a pittance because our pockets are empty. If you lose the land, you lose the country. [passage omitted]

I also think the State Duma has taken a very important move regarding election supervision. It passed an addendum that allows any observer to receive from any polling station the results of voting and, consequently, to oversee them at district, town and regional level. The requirement for special licences is removed.

[Correspondent] U.S. President Clinton met the Russian political elite. You were at that meeting. Various accounts have been given of your part in the meeting and of the views that you set out to Mr. Clinton. In particular, Mr. Chubays said in an interview with Russian Television that the economic policies you espoused to Clinton were entirely different from those in your election campaign. Was that a fair comment? And what is your view of President Clinton's meeting with top politicians?

[Zyuganov] As regards meetings with leaders, here in this office there are always all sorts of people who are interested in building relationships with us. I met the ambassadors of all the leading countries here, including the G-7, quite recently. We discussed how events are developing in Russia, including the election campaign.

During the G-7 summit I had a wide-ranging meeting with British Prime Minister Major, and there was also the collective meeting with Clinton. I think it was useful. The three of us — Goryacheva, Seleznev and myself — put across our point of view and described things as we see them. That includes the collapse of the economy and mass impoverishment. But we were quite straight in saying there is only way out of this situation: peaceful, fair and democratic elections and respect for the choice of our citizens. His direct response to that was that the United States Administration would respect the choice made by our people.

A second viewpoint was given by the so-called third force: Lebed and Yavlinskiy, and the party of power was also well represented, from Luzhkov to Chubays and a whole clutch of governors. They were saying that everything's just fine and dandy, with which, to be honest, it is difficult to agree. But nonetheless, it was a useful talk.

Most interestingly of all, this kind of dialogue takes place at various levels worldwide and in Europe. I suggested two years ago that all three branches of power in Russia should get together regularly, every month, and discuss the situation. But neither the president's team nor the government can find the courage for regular meetings to discuss these issues. My suggestion now is that all the presidential candidates should get together and debate the real situation, the rules of the game, strict observance of the law and standards so that we can cover the most difficult parts of the road, especially in our unstable times. That's not all we're proposing. We're also proposing a draft law on a mechanism for the handover of power with the appropriate guarantees, to put an end to the enmity and

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the division of people into Whites and Reds, democrats and non-democrats, so that higher values can take precedence. These values are our homeland, and its peace and wellbeing. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Russia: Yeltsin: Cost of Reversing Reforms 'Maybe Even Civil War'

MM2604155096 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Apr 96 p 1

[Unattributed report under the "Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow" rubric: "Journalists Are Pushy, President Is Calm"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Russian President Boris Yeltsin does not share the pessimism of those who are assuming that market relations will gradually be wound up.

Answering questions put to him by journalists from Ivanovo Oblast, the head of state noted that the main achievement in Russia's development since 1991 has been that "it has been gradual and reformist, despite the attempts to turn the country back in the opposite direction."

Boris Yeltsin believes that a lot of people, particularly young people, are working in the new spheres of activity: Russians now know at first hand what freedom of the individual, private ownership, and the market economy are. "An excessively high price — maybe even civil war, the collapse of the state, international isolation, the transformation of Russia into the old bugbear of the civilized world — would have to be paid to break these trends, if only in order to reestablish the administrative-edict system, never mind restoring the procedures of the Soviet system."

The president is convinced that "the people will be wise enough not to let that happen."

Boris Yeltsin's answers were circulated by his press service.

Russia: Minister: No Military Hardware in 9 May Red Square Parade

LD2604134096 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian 1100 GMT 26 Apr 96

[Video report by correspondents Igor Demin and Leonid Mirzoyev; from the "Novosti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer] A military parade is to be held in Red Square on 9 May, the 51st anniversary of victory in the Great Fatherland War. A rehearsal for the parade took place in Moscow's Khodynskoye Pole today.

[Correspondent] Russian Deputy Defense Minister Vladimir Toporov inspected the readiness of the military subunits for the parade, and apparently he was satisfied. [video shows troops marching past, cuts to show Deputy Defense Minister V. Toporov, identified by caption, being interviewed]

[Begin Toporov recording] The weather has not been all that good. We expected it to be warmer. [end recording]

He also said that there are two factors concerning the coming parade: first, victory banners will be carried, and second, there will be no columns of military hardware. The second factor is due to the construction work that is under way in Red Square. In addition the parade is scheduled to begin at 0900, an hour earlier than usual.

The parade will be shown live in its entirety only on Russian Public TV channels.

Russia: Security Intensified in St Petersburg for May Holidays

LD2704195396 Moscow NTV in Russian 1800 GMT 27 Apr 96

[By Mikhail Osokin; from the "Segodnya" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Security measures have been enhanced in the run-up to the May holidays. Measures are also being taken in Russia: though such clashes [referring to protests in Minsk] are not happening there, the authorities are stepping up the guard on various installations, just in case. We have the details:

[Unidentified correspondent, over video of militia road checks] Following the latest events in Chechnya, the authorities in St. Petersburg are taking additional security measures. Reinforced units of militia and Special Unit Militia Detachment have been posted on all the busy main roads in the city and at the railway stations and airports. Vehicles entering the city are carefully checked, especially those coming from the south. According to the press service of the St. Petersburg internal affairs administration, these measures are being taken to prevent weapons and ammunition from being brought into the city.

Russia: Communists Warn of Provocations Over May Day Holidays

LD2604145196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1224 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 26 (Interfax) — The faction of the Russian Communist Party in the State Duma does not rule out the likelihood of various provocations in Moscow on May 1 due to the celebration of the Day of the International Solidarity of

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the Working People, as well as on Victory Day on May 9.

The statement made public warns that the Communists "have received alarming news that some structures with rather indefinite legal status are hatching plans to frustrate the nationwide holidays and are prepared to organize open political provocations using physical violence."

A members of the Communist faction, Chairman of the Duma Security Committee Viktor Ilyukhin said that recently "over 300 Simonov carbines were distributed in Moscow and Moscow region as 'hunting rifles' by certain persons who are not hunters at all."

Ilyukhin refused to say who those people are and who gave them carbines.

Ilyukhin said that "there are rumors which should be verified," that some representatives of presidential structures recently met with the leader of the Russian National Unity movement Aleksandr Barkashev and encouraged him to commit provocations on May 1 and 9.

According to Ilyukhin, provocations could be expected from some private guard services, "not all the staff members of which will be glad at the coming to power of the 'red' president."

The participants of the news conference said that the Communist Party and associations which form a bloc in support of Communist Party leader Gennadiy Zyuganov at the presidential elections will do their best to prevent any "extremist manifestations" from participants in the May Day demonstration."

Russia: Official: Domestic Threats Prevail Over External Threats

LD2604203296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1758 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, April 26 (Interfax) — Domestic threats facing Russia prevail over external threats to the country, Sergey Kortunov, a member of the structure under Russian presidential advisor on national security Yuriy Baturin, said at a news conference in Moscow Friday.

Kortunov is part of the task force preparing a draft of the document entitled "Russia's Policy of National Security" for the period from 1996 until the year 2000.

When asked to specify domestic threats, Kortunov cited "a rise in regional ethnic separatism, the possibility of inter-ethnic and religious conflicts, and the economic crisis."

For the first time the draft of the document on Russian national security policy is open to the public and broad discussion, Kortunov stressed.

Experts are also working on a concept for the national security of Russia intended for a longer period than the next four or five years, he said.

Russia: MVD Aide: Terrorist Acts in Russian Cities 'Not Ruled Out'

MM2604142396 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 27 Apr 96 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Russian Power Departments Promise: There Will Not Be a Second 'Budennovsk'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Is a repetition of Budennovsk and Pervomayskoye possible, will the gunmen, after the death of their leader, set about implementing the so-called retribution plan that Dzhokhar Dudayev spoke of repeatedly? These questions today concern the man in the street at least as much as the election battles of the Russian presidential candidates.

An informed source at the Russian Federation Ministry of Internal Affairs told IZVESTIYA correspondent Yuriy Snegirev that attempts to destabilize the situation by carrying out terrorist acts in Russia's major cities during the May holidays are not ruled out. "Nobody is guaranteed against that," the source added.

Our correspondent has learned that the so-called reinforced option is being introduced in Moscow in connection with the holidays; this makes provision for heightened security on the subway and ground transport and also at vitally important facilities, of which there are more than 300 in the capital. It has been decided to attach some 2,000 servicemen of the internal troops to help the municipal forces of law and order.

In the next day or two the number of policemen involved in protecting public order in the capital will reach 10,000, IZVESTIYA correspondent Yuriy Senatorov was told by a source at the city's Main Internal Affairs Administration. They are also enlisting the mounted police, but according to some reports its main task will be the protection of all parks and forest park zones, where an influx of nature-lovers is expected in the first days of May.

At the Federal Security Service for Moscow and Moscow Oblast, IZVESTIYA was told, "all operational subunits were focused on the possibility of acts of sabotage in the capital from the very start of the hostilities in Chechnya." Admittedly, in conversation with IZVESTIYA's correspondent, one high-ranking official hinted that "it does not make sense for the Chechens to

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engage in terrorism in the city that supplies them with money and where that money is laundered."

Media Issues

Russia: 'Itogi': Deliberate Attempts to Alarm Public Over Terrorism

LD2804212196 Moscow NTV in Russian 1700 GMT 28 Apr 96

[From the "Itogi" program]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Studio announcer Yevgeniy Kiselev] Now for the latest event in Chechnya, where Dzhokhar Dudayev's supporters are declaring their readiness to revenge their leader's death. [passage omitted]

This week, our film crew had their passes for the press center of the Federal Group of Troops in Groznyy taken away. A few days before that, our company was not allowed to transmit a dispatch from the Groznyy television center. And staff at the Chechen Internal Affairs Ministry told our correspondents directly that they had been instructed by the power structures to restrict contacts with NTV Television.

One gets the impression that some power ministries' leaders are trying to impede our company from covering the actions of the federal troops in Chechnya, so as then — as has already happened in January 1995 — to accuse NTV Television of a pro-Dudayev position.

Wide publicity has been given this week to the publication of the transcript of Dzhokhar Dudayev's telephone conversation with Duma Deputy Konstantin Borovoy, which allegedly took place immediately before the death of the rebel general. According to Borovoy, Dudayev alleged that his supporters were preparing a series of acts of terrorism in Moscow at the beginning of May. [passage omitted: Borovoy did not mention this in 1535 GMT 23 April "Hero of the Day" program, but apparently remembered it after Yandarbiyev named Borovoy as last person to talk to Dudayev]

The main thing here, and the most amazing, in my view, is that Borovoy's announcement is clearly being used in order to get the public used to the idea of the possibility of acts of terrorism in the Russian capital. In this situation, it is hard to shed the impression that in the run-up to the May public holidays someone is trying to whip up feelings of alarm in the public. There are more than enough such feelings as it is. And they were reinforced after the latest major crime committed in Moscow before the weekend. I mean the mysterious killing of Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin's personal doctor.

Russia: Chernomyrdin Speaks on Media, Privatization, Chechnya

LD2604185096 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1822 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 26 (Itar-Tass) — Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin attended a press conference of regional media on Friday.

The conference was also attended by Vitaliy Ignatenko, Deputy Prime Minister in charge of media, and by other cabinet ministers.

Speaking about the Chechen issue, Chernomyrdin said that the Russian government is "far from the thought that the knot of the Chechen problems can be untied during one day."

He said the state commission for the Chechen settlement, which he chairs, "will continue to work and use all measures of political (negotiating), economic and military character for war cessation and establishment of peace in the republic."

Chernomyrdin stressed that the bulk of appropriations for Chechnya would come to it no sooner than peace is in place.

"The main thing about the restoration of Chechnya is not to get in the wheel, when we restore today and everything is destroyed tomorrow, this once happened already," he said.

Nonetheless, 100 percent of allocations in pensions and funds for the planting season is reaching Chechnya, he added.

Chernomyrdin assured that payroll, pension and social benefits would be coming to regions under a strict timetable in the second quarter of the year.

There will be no delays of the wage and pensions, he stressed.

Touching on media coverage of Russia's developments, Chernomyrdin said he wanted an ideology of the statehood to dominate news programmes.

"We should not forget that a considerable portion of funds for operation of different media, first of all television companies, comes from the budget," he pointed out.

Chernomyrdin said he dislikes much in news bulletins. He explained that reporters exploit the fact that "bad news sells and is costlier than bad one."

A programme of change in regional telecasting is being drafted under the control of Deputy Prime Minister Vitaliy Ignatenko, Chernomyrdin said.

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Speaking on economic issues, Chernomyrdin assured that there would be no mass scale return to state ownership of joint stock companies and privatised enterprises.

The government will buy out some of joint stock companies, in which the state has a major holding but which do not fare well, Chernomyrdin said.

Such companies will be put through reform to be offered again to the market, he explained. This is a usual privatisation practice of the state, he added.

Chernomyrdin said he favoured privatisation of land with the right of selling it, but this programme would be gradual and keep agricultural land in use.

As gradual should be the army reform, so that neither the army nor Russia's defence effectiveness are damaged," Chernomyrdin said.

He said today's conference was his first opportunity to meet such a representative gathering of regional delegates of the fourth power.

Military & Space Issues

Russia: Border Troops Increase Presence in Arctic

LD2604215896 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0940 GMT 26 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vasiliy Belousov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Murmansk, 26 April: The servicemen of the youngest in the country border troops unit — the Arctic border troops — are defending the section of the Russian border from Karelia in the west to Khatanga in the east. This section will be extended by another 5,000 km along the Arctic coast in the near future. Civilian experts and representatives of the border troops command arrived here today to assess the area and draw up a program for organizing border facilities and services and deploying military units here.

The role of the border service in the country's defense system has increased sharply after deep cuts in the Russian Armed Forces, an ITAR-TASS correspondent learned at the headquarters of the Arctic border troops. Our units have to keep under their surveillance even those Arctic areas that are difficult to access and that were protected by the Air Defense Troops. So now new border posts have to be set up where only scientific polar and meteorological stations used to be. The aim of this is to protect sea and the Arctic coast resources from plundering. There have been recently quite a few people in our country and abroad who want to lay hands on these riches.

Russia: Space Research Module Docks Successfully With Mir Station

LD2604171296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1438 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Apr 26 (Interfax) — A 19.5-tonne Russian-built research module, Priroda, launched from the Baykonur Cosmodrome, Kazakhstan, on April 23 docked in unmanned mode with the orbiting Mir station at 1643 Moscow time [1243 GMT] on Friday. A crew of three is now aboard the station, two Russian cosmonauts, Yuriy Onufrienko and Yuriy Usachev, and one NASA astronaut, Shannon Lucid.

The docking will help Russia finalize the construction of an orbiting manned complex, a process which has already taken 10 years.

Priroda is designed to monitor the earth's surface and atmosphere, conduct biological experiments, study the effect of space radiation on the human body, and obtain medical preparations at a high level of purity.

The module also carries over 900 kilograms of research equipment from Russia, the United States, Britain, and Germany intended for carrying out various experiments aboard the Mir station.

Federal Assembly

Russia: Duma Passes Bill on Presidential Inauguration

LD2604202296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1758 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, April 26 (INTERFAX) — The Russian State Duma has passed on the first reading a bill on the inauguration of the Russian president, drafted by the Duma Legislative Affairs Committee.

The draft was approved by 256 votes at the Duma plenary session Friday.

Under the bill, during a one-month transition period the outgoing president must inform the president-elect about decisions relating to the introduction of a state of emergency or martial law, and about the use of the Armed Forces.

The outgoing president and the president-elect must establish an official accord for the transition period, allowing the president-elect to attend sessions of the government, the Security Council, houses of parliament and other federal agencies, not interfering with the activities of his predecessor. The president-elect takes office on the 30th day after the results of the presidential elections are officially announced.

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The draft contains alternative proposals on obligatory suspension by the president-elect of his membership in a party or a political group or on striking this provision from the text of the bill. The deputies decided to discuss the proposal later, most likely during the second reading of the bill.

Under the bill, the government resigns immediately after the president-elect takes office. The latter appoints an acting prime minister until his candidacy is approved by the State Duma. Meanwhile, the previous government continues working until a new Cabinet is formed. Government ministers are proposed by the new prime minister and approved by the president.

After taking office, the new president is to hold a meeting of the supreme military command of the Armed Forces. He also has the right to appoint or dismiss members of the supreme military command of the Armed Forces.

Russia: State Duma Discusses Range of Military Issues

MM2904094096 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 26 Apr 96 p 3

[Report by parliamentary correspondent Vladimir Yermolin: "Deputies Concerned Over Soldiers' Rations"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On Thursday [25 April] the Russian Federation State Duma considered a number of questions of direct relevance to the Armed Forces.

The extraordinary plenary session which took place 25 April began with a discussion of the problem of food and clothing supply for the Army and Navy. The deputies were addressed by Colonel General Vladimir Churbanov, deputy defense minister and chief of the Russian Federation Armed Forces Rear Forces.

Last week KRASNAYA ZVEZDA informed readers of the contents of information supplied by the Defense Ministry to the State Duma on this subject. Let us recall that the information cited figures confirming the chronic underfunding of Defense Ministry requirements from the federal budget. Thus, Army and Navy food appropriations allocated for 1995 covered only 76.3 percent of their requirement given the need for a 100-percent, daily supply for personnel. For this reason the military department's debts to suppliers as of 1 January 1996 totaled 1,037 billion rubles, for the repayment of which the 1996 budget makes no provision, which means that the money for these purposes must be taken from the current budget. Debts again.

Mikhail Surkov, deputy chairman of the State Duma Defense Committee, who presented the committee's position during the discussion, believes that a parliamentary decree should give instructions both to the government and the Main Military Prosecutor's Office on imposing order regarding the supply of food and uniforms to the Armed Forces. Surkov also reported that the State Duma had sent an appeal to the Russian Federation president on the problem of funding the Russian Federation Armed Forces. The State Duma will finally adopt a decree on the question under discussion on Friday, 26 April.

On the same day the draft law on supplementing the Russian Federation Law "On the Military Service Obligation and Military Service" was adopted in its first reading. Essentially it boils down to a reduction in the term of service to 18 months for those servicemen who have served in military conflict areas and trouble spots. Aleksandr Kotenkov, the Russian Federation president's representative in the State Duma, agreed to the draft law in principle. During its preparation for the second reading only the period spent in a trouble spot which confers the right to a reduction in the term of service will be clarified (a month, two months, three months?).

Another amendment to the same law envisaging one and a half years' service for those who were drafted for one and a half years was not passed.

Russia: State Duma Adjourns Until 15 May

LD2604220596 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1900 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Deputies of the Russian State Duma, who today completed their last plenary session of the month, are dispersing to their constituencies for work with electors. The next session of the lower house is scheduled for 15 May. Viktor Chernomyrdin, the head of the government, is expected to address this session. He will deliver a report on the execution of the 1996 budget during the first quarter. During the session on 15 May the MP's will debate the government's report. They may get down to actual legislative work on 24 May.

Regional Affairs

Russia: Yeltsin Envoy Pain Upbeat on Chechen Peace Prospects

LD2704161796 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1209 GMT 27 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Emil Pain, the head of the president's working group to find a peace settlement in Chechnya, has just returned from a visit to Groznyy. Asked by our correspondent about the realistic chances of putting the peace plan into effect now, this is what he said:

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[Begin Pain recording] There is no link between avenging Dudayev and halting work on the peace plan. For a number of reasons.

First, the peace plan consisted not only of talks with Dudayev. It has three main points. The first is talks with the public in Chechnya, with the government and public, heads of administration, districts, and villages on creating zones of peace. This process is continuing, and it is more effective than the press will have you believe. Nearly 90 percent of populated localities have now signed such agreements, and this is providing a sort of skeleton peace arrangement.

Second, preparations are underway for parliamentary elections. All political parties in Chechnya acknowledge that honest and democratic elections are essential, without any one political force having an advantage. The question is when to hold them, on what terms, and on what guarantees. There are some serious disagreements between political forces in Chechnya over this at present. However, there are very good chances of overcoming them, and my trip to Groznyy and my talks with various political forces and representatives of political parties and public movements showed that there is a reasonable amount of room for compromise. There are opportunities to compromise in this respect.

And finally third, federal authorities are in touch with representatives of the illegal armed formations. This forms part of the peace plan and was not linked directly to Dudayev alone. It is a strategic policy and nobody is preparing to drop it. Offers to hold meetings will be sent to representatives of these formations' current leadership. Whether they will agree remains an open question, because their positions and the line-up of forces is not yet known. But I think there is fairly good likelihood of contacts via mediators resuming in one form or another. [end recording]

Russia: Yegorov: Dudayev's Death Should Move Peace Process Along

LD2604223496 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1900 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Today, Nikolay Yegorov, the head of the Russian president's administration, acquainted himself with Kaliningrad Region. Our correspondent Gennadiy Sablin reports:

[Begin Sablin recording] Immediately after arriving at Kaliningrad's Chkalov military airfield, Nikolay Yegorov told journalists that all his meetings in Russia's westernmost region will have an election context. The program for the visit by the president's chief of staff takes account of the fact that one-third of the electorate in this enclave are connected one way or another with military service and the sea. He is to visit warships and units of the Baltic Fleet and meet farmers' representatives. Today, Nikolay Dmitriyevich had a fairly frank conversation with students and teachers of Kaliningrad State University.

Nikolay Yegorov, who is usually cautious with predictions, risked commenting on the new situation in Chechnya following the death of General Dudayev. He believes that the process of finding a peaceful settlement to the conflict in this trouble spot should now move along faster.

A broad range of social problems were discussed during Yegorov's meeting with employees of the Region's transport sector.

This is Gennadiy Sablin reporting from Kaliningrad for the Radio Russia news service. [end recording]

Russia: Premier: Moscow To Use All Methods To Solve Chechen Crisis

LD2604162196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1438 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 26 (Interfax) — The Russian government will use "all mechanisms and all possibilities to settle the Chechen conflict regardless of circumstances," Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin said Friday meeting with representatives of Russian regional mass media.

Principal positions towards conflict settlement drawn up in President Boris Yeltsin's plan "will not be changed and will be successively implemented. Nobody should have any doubts," he said.

"We are far from any illusions that the conflict can be stooped within several days," he said. "However, we shall work in this direction and will succeed in this."

Asked about the forces opposing the peace settlement, Chernomyrdin recognized that they "have definite influence." These forces are being concentrated on the territory of Chechnya, he said. "The (assassination) attempts against the commander of the federal troops in Chechnya Gen. Anatolly Romanov and Russia's Security Council secretary Oleg Lobov, who have done much to stop the tragedy, hang on their conscience."

Chernomyrdin confirmed the intention of the federal authorities to Implement a program for economic reconstruction. "We shall restore it," he said.

However, it is necessary to establish a stable situation on the republic's territory before starting restoration works. "We must not work in line with the principle - restore today and start again from scratch tomorrow," he said.

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Russia: Tatar President Still Seen as Mediator in Chechen War

LD2604161396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1553 GMT 26 Apr 96

[By Gennadiy Yezhov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 26 (Itar-Tass) — Federal authorities still see Tatar President Mintimer Shaymiyev as a mediator of the negotiations with Chechen separatists, Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin said at a news conference today.

Shaymiyev, who had been proposed to the Chechen side as the intermediary in Moscow's talks with Dzhokhar Dudayev "will also agree for contacts with those representatives of Chechen separatists who agree to peace dialogue after the declared death of the general (Dudayev)," Chernomyrdin said.

He said "the president of Tatarstan is one of few political figures who has volunteered to mediate the Chechen settlement and has not made any conditions at that."

Chernomyrdin said "there are forces which do not want the establishment of peace in Chechnya, and they often aim their blow on those who are trying to stop the war."

He recalled the fate of General Anatoliy Romanov, the former commander of federal forces in Chechnya and the attempt to assassinate Russian Security Council Secretary Oleg Lobov, who came to Chechnya to oversee the progress of its restoration programme.

"Those attempts have not been arranged from Moscow," Chernomyrdin said, adding that the party of war should be looked for in Chechnya.

Meanwhile, Shaymiyev said in a statement on Thursday that he refused to take up the mediator role now that Dudayev is dead.

Russia: Parliament Speaker on Chechen Peace Agreement

LD2604141496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1224 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 26 (Interfax) — State Duma Speaker Gennadiy Seleznyev feels the lower house of the Russian legislature could play a more active role in the quest for a Chechen peace accord. As for himself, Seleznyev is ready to meet with separatist army chief-of-staff Aslan Maskhadov, Seleznyev told reporters Friday in Strasbourg where the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe is holding session.

Nonetheless, "you cannot hold negotiations without an appropriate mandate," Seleznyev said, and one must know who the separatists see as their potential negotiating partners.

Besides, there is still "a big question mark" over the death of separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev. Seleznyev said he would be sure of Dudayev's death only after he had seen the body.

Seleznyev sees Aslan Maskhadov as more outgoing than Dzhokhar Dudayev. Maskhadov "harbors stronger feelings for Chechnya," he said.

He ruled out the possibility of talks or meetings with field commander Shamil Basayev and described Basayev as "a criminal whose hands are splashed with blood."

A Chechen commission of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe will send a ten-man mission to Moscow on May 30, Seleznyev said. Some of the Parliamentary Assembly emissaries are planning to visit both Moscow and Groznyy.

Russia: Basayev Seen in Best Position To Inherit Dudayev's Powers

MK2604114596 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 26 Apr 96 p 3

[Report by Dmitriy Kamyshev: "The Key Terrorist Appointed the Key Peacemaker"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Having paid their last respects to their late leader, Dudayev's followers started talking about peace. Yet, they did so in a fairly peculiar fashion, by appointing the terrorist Shamil Basayev as delegation head in possible talks. From that at least two conclusions can be drawn: First, the new Dudayevite leadership will pursue at least as hard-line a policy with regard to Russia as Dudayev himself did; and, second, Basayev is emerging as one of the separatists' real leaders.

It was Vagap Tutakov, Dudayev's representative to Moscow, who told INTERFAX yesterday about the appointment of Shamil Basayev, "the most authoritative field commander," as the "main peacemaker." In his words, this decision was made by the Dudayev government and personally by Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev. Clearly, Basayev was appointed delegation head to spite Moscow, which was hoping finally to start talks with the already familiar Maskhadov or, at the very least, Yandarbiyev, who is not listed as a wanted criminal. Given that the name of Maskhadov is completely absent from the list read out by Basayev the other day on the "presidential" television channel, it is becoming clear that the new separatist leadership has adopted an even more hard-line stance on relations with Russia than the late general.

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Both aforementioned facts appear to confirm that it is Basayev who is for now gaining the upper hand in the struggle for the post of "shadow president" under Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev. This circumstance will give the Russian leadership yet another headache: Official talks with the best-known Chechen terrorist could prove to be simply impossible. In all likelihood, this is the reaction the separatists expect, since they have already warned that Moscow's refusal to negotiate with Basayev would prove its insincerity in the search for peace in Chechnya.

The official Chechen authorities, for their part, think that a dialogue should be maintained with all influential bandit chiefs. In particular, this is what Doku Zavgayev has told your KOMMERSANT-DAILY correspondent on the phone. At the same time, he noted that there is no single leader among the separatists who could realistically claim to speak on behalf of the rest. Moreover, Zavgayev said that now the separatists have the opportunity "to return to normal life." Abdula Bugayev, first deputy prime minister of Chechnya, even said yesterday that Basayev was the best person to negotiate with, because he is allegedly "a man of his word." It is not yet clear, however, whether this "man of his word" will want to return to normal life.

Russia: Interior Minister: Confirmation of Dudayev's Death Exists

LD2604205896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1758 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riga, April 26 (Interfax) — Russia's Interior Minister Anatoliy Kulikov has said that he has confirmation of the fact of the death of Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev on the part of the operative services at his disposal.

Addressing a press conference in Riga Friday, he however said that he does not know the details of Dudayev's death.

The version stating that Dudayev was killed by a specially guided rocket "has no official grounds," he said.

Predicting further events in Chechnya, Kulikov said: "The authority and influence of those field commanders who advocate the cessation of hostilities in the republic would probably grow in the current situation.

"There are such commanders, but until now Dudayev was restraining their initiative," Kulikov said.

Russia: Dudayev Death May Have Been Caused by Mine in Car

LD2804180496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1710 GMT 28 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, April 28 (Interfax - Ukraine) - The death of Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev near the village of Gekhi-Chu (southeastern Chechnya) during the night April 21 was caused by a mine planted in his car, not by a missile, representatives of the Chechen community in Kiev told Interfax - Ukraine Sunday. They alleged that they had received this information from Dudayev's nephew.

They also announced that Dudayev had been buried in accordance with the Muslim traditions, on the day of death and before dark. Therefore, his body was not identified by the relatives.

The ultra-nationalist organization UNA-UNSO is holding a meeting of protest against the war in Chechnya in Kiev Sunday.

Russia: Dudayev's Widow Appeals to Turkish President

LD2904093796 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0910 GMT 29 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Palariya]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ankara, 29 Apr — Alla Dudayeva, the wife of the late Chechen leader, has appealed to Turkish President Suleyman Demirel "to assist in implementing the peace initiatives aimed at a settlement of the conflict in Chechnya in the immediate future." She conveyed this message to the head of the Turkish Republic through the mass media today, having expressed the hope that "the voice of Demirel will reach the Russian leaders."

"I hope," A. Dudayeva said, "that the president of Turkey will get my message immediately and I will be able to set about my peace mission." She also warned that "the tears in the eyes of Chechen young men will soon dry up and then it will be too late." "I want to take advantage of the moment as quickly as possible and hope that those who are opposed to bloodshed in this world will render me support."

Russia: Chechens Said Planning Terrorist Acts to Avenge Dudayev

LD2604130496 Moscow 2x2 Television in Russian 1200 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Chechen fighters are planning a series of acts of revenge at the end of April for the death of [Dzhokhar] Dudayev. Sergey Stepashin, former

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chairman of the federal counter-intelligence service and presently chairman of the state commission for a settlement in Chechnya, told INTERFAX this today.

According to operational information, Chechen fighters are planning up to 12 acts of terrorism, both in Chechnya itself and outside the republic, from 27 April. According to Stepashin, this could take the form of acts of diversion and also attacks on well-known political figures.

Russia: Stepashin Believes Dudayev Killed in Internal Dispute

LD2604172896 Moscow NTV in Russian 1500 GMT 26 Apr 96

[Video report by unidentified correspondent, including recorded comments by Sergey Stepashin, former head of the Federal Security Service; from the "Segodnya" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Sergey Stepashin, former head of the Federal Security Service and current executive secretary of the government commission for the investigation into the circumstances of the shooting of the Russian military column at the village of Dachu-Borzoy on 16 April, who returned from Chechnya late yesterday evening, took part today in celebrations on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the interior troop special units.

News about Dudayev's death reached Stepashin in Groznyy. He is firmly convinced that the federal forces had nothing to do with the death of Dudayev.

[Stepashin] The elimination of Dudayev is a matter of internal wrangles. All the more so since those who have come to power today in the so-called Republic of Ichkeria were essentially removed by Dudayev from the political, military, and financial leadership four months ago.

For me personally, and, I think, for members of the state commission, it has no fundamental significance. Dudayev has disappeared from the political arena, that is, Allah has taken him from the Earth!

[Correspondent] Sergey Stepashin said that consultations both with the government of Zavgayev and with the Dudayev side will continue regardless of whether Dudayev is alive now or dead.

[Stepashin] Consultations are already underway. With your permission, I will not mention some things, the names of those whom I met when I was in Groznyy, who are meeting our intermediaries. That process is already underway. But understand me correctly — there are many things that we cannot advertise and talk about. What is important is the result. [passage omitted]

Russia: Chechens Said To Focus on Economic, Environmental Sabotage

LD2704123996 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1054 GMT 27 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Boris Kipkeyev]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 27 April — Some of the irreconcilable rebels and foreign mercenaries fighting in Chechnya have recently changed their tactics. According to Aleksandr Zdanovich, the acting head of the Federal Security Service (FSS) public relations office, the Chechens have switched from direct encounters with the federal troops to terrorism and sabotage, to include economic and environmental targets.

Analysis of the situation in the Chechen Republic shows that the so-called idea of a "free Ichkeria" has been dropped for the time being by a certain section of the rebels. According to reports reaching the FSS, many rebel groups and gangs are out of control and for a long time have been fighting purely for the sake of it. They hope for "material dividends" and operate on the principle of "apres moi le deluge" [after me the flood].

However, separatist commanders try to do their fighting away from their own villages, Zdanovich stressed. One of the reasons for the constant migration of rebel gangs, and in particular Shamil Basayev's unit, is the wish to distract federal units away from Vedeno district — Basayev's home town — and away from the villages that give them [the rebels] sustenance.

The aim of the diehard rebels and foreign mercenaries is to sabotage oil and industrial installations so as to prolong the Chechnya conflict as much as possible. There is good money to be made from sowing economic chaos, the FSS spokesman said.

Oil derricks on the Ter and Sunzha ridges and the Duvayskaya well near Groznyy have recently been rendered unusable. The rebels destroy pipelines leading to refineries and use the oil for their own purposes. Losses at these three sites are running at over 500 tonnes a day, Zdanovich reported. The rebels have their own mini-refineries in the mountains to produce fuel. Surplus output is sold off in the republic.

One of the largest and most profitable wells, Groznenskaya on the southern outskirts of the capital, was set ablaze by bursts of machine-gun fire overnight on 25-26 April. The daily output loss here is 2,500 tonnes. According to the Chechnya Government, the loss of these four oil wells is costing the republic 300,000 dollars a day.

Home-made refineries cause not only economic but also environmental problems. Oil refining without regard for

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the environment is leading to discharge of waste products directly into mountain rivers, the FSS spokesman said, which is causing severe pollution to pastures.

So much oil has seeped into the soil that "one can talk of an impending environmental catastrophe in the republic", according to Zayndi Durdiyev, the fuel and energy ministry representative for Chechnya.

This could have irreversible consequences for the Chechen Republic and the entire North Caucasus region, the FSS spokesman said. He said the FSS could not understand why this outstanding problem was being totally ignored by Russian and international environmental organizations. Meanwhile, there has been much controversy abroad and at home over the case of Aleksandr Nikitin, a former officer in the Russian navy who worked for the Norwegian environmental organization Bellona. His case is a purely criminal matter and nothing at all to do with the environment, Zdanovich said.

Russia: Chechen Rebels Said To Carry Out 'Terrorist Acts' 28-29 Apr

LD2804122896 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 1200 GMT 28 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Chechen rebels intend to carry out a number of terrorist acts in Vladikavkaz today or tomorrow [28 and 29 April], Yuriy Shchekochikhin, a member of parliament and a member of the Duma security committee, told our radio. He said that, according to his information, the rebels are concentrating two kilometers northwest of the village of Staryy Achkhoy in Chechnya. There are about 30 of them. Shchekochikhin said it had been this group that had attacked a convoy of the 245th motorized infantry regiment. They are equipped with three Grad rocket-launchers and two tanks.

Russia: New Chechen Leader Calls For Jihad Against Russia

MS2604122096 London THE GUARDIAN in English 26 Apr 96 p 13

[Report by David Hearst: "Chechen Leader Pledges 'Holy War'"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Rochni-Chu, Chechen — The new leader of the Chechen separatist cause, Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, called last night for a jihad against Russia, saying that only through war could his people achieve independence from Moscow.

Speaking in the village of Rochni-Chu, less than a mile from where his predecessor Dzhokhar Dudayev met his death this week, he vowed to continue the war to the bitter end.

Close by lay the huge crater left by the rocket which killed Dudayev and wrecked his car as he tried by satellite phone to arrange peace talks through an intermediary.

In a long monologue, the quietly spoken Mr Yandarbiyev declared: "They say the Chechen people are buried. We are not buried ... I will take the lead in a war, in a jihad of the Chechen people in the name of Allah and in the name of the freedom of the Chechen people."

This sounded the death knell for the peace initiative Mr Yeltsin launched at the beginning of the month when he promised a limited withdrawal of troop from Chechen villages which signed the peace agreement.

Mr Yandarbiyev said he had been appointed by "the state committee of defence and cabinet of ministers", a formula which skirted round the rumoured misgivings of such increasingly independent war lords as Shamil Basayev and Ruslan Gelayev.

He went out of his way to brand President Yeltsin a criminal. He called the Russian state "a mafioso-like creation" and said that responsibility for the war and destruction visited on the Chechen nation lay with Mr Yeltsin himself.

"We consider him guilty. He was guilty at the start of this war and I am convinced of that and the whole world is too."

He appeared to threaten Mr Yeltsin's life, thus closing the door firmly on any attempts to negotiate with the Russian leadership.

Mr Yandarbiyev, formerly the rebels' ideology chief, has never been known for his ability to compromise.

Reactions in Grozny last night were mixed. Many refused to believe that Dudayev was dead, and thought the whole episode an elaborate hoax. Many former fighters found fault with Mr Yandarbiyev, saying he had not stayed in Groznyy to organise its defence, that he was not a military man, and that he had little authority.

Nicolai Sambiyev, aged 43 said: "For me he is not an authoritative man. Basayev or Gelayev are." Others said they did not believe he would be anything other than a figurehead.

The centre of Groznyy is now a desolate clearance site. The presidential palace, the symbol of Chechen resistance, is a huge pile of rubble, among which the old lamp posts still stand erect.

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Silence enfolds the centre, broken only by the sharp rattle of heavy machine gun fire. Russian armoured personnel carriers do not dally, even in broad daylight. One fired a salvo into the air at a road junction to warn other cars to get out of the way. The new masters of Groznyy shoot first and ask questions later.

An outraged Chechen market trader said: "They even shoot off their guns in time to the music they hear on their head phones, just to inspire fear in us, so that we are in a permanent state of shock."

A woman called Rosa said: "Who is considered a bandit? A cat? A dog? A seven-year-old boy this high? There are two boys who went mushroom picking yesterday. The Russians shot at them too, and now they are in an intensive care unit. Is that justice?"

Russia: Dudayev's 'Successor' Addresses First News Conference

MM2604192096 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 27 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Aleksandr Yevtushenko: "'I Was Privy to the Deceased President's Plans.' So Said Dudayev's Successor at His First News Conference"]

[FBIS Translated Text] These hills near the settlement of Gekha-Chu in Urus-Martanovskiy Rayon are probably destined to become a place of pilgrimage for many Chechens: It was here that Dzhokhar Dudayev met his death.

At the time none of the survivors here realized immediately that the projectile — whether artillery or aircraft — had hit home. Dudayev's security guard, who ran to the scene of the explosion, was confronted with the following picture. A smoking crater, the twisted wreckage of a "Niva," and bodies tossed about by the explosion....

Last Thursday, when I visited the place where Dudayev had been killed, the vehicle wrecked by the explosion was no longer there. It had been taken to a safer place, as a relic. There was partially fused debris around the still fresh crater. Of, as it turns out, an air-to-ground guided missile, pieces of a vehicle, and bent and broken saplings.

"Right now we have no reason to be happy about anything. But neither is there any need to present what happened as a catastrophe that will resolve the problem of our struggle one way or the other," so said Dudayev's successor, Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev at the start of his news conference. He is now acting president, prime minister, and commander in chief of the forces. Yandarbiyev was meeting with journalists in a settlement in Urus-Martanovskiy Rayon toward evening on 25 April, with KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA and NTV from the Russian media present as an exception to the rule.

Yandarbiyev talked in some detail — for more than half an hour - - about his position and future plans.

"I have taken up my new duties under the Constitution of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria well aware of the need to restore peace to our land. And for the sake of that peace I am heading the Chechen people's holy war in the name of Allah and freedom. We do not regard this war as a tolerable phenomenon. Nonetheless the good thing about it is the prospect of the revival of the Chechen people and the entire Caucasus. Indeed a holy war is the path to purification for both the individual and entire communities."

That said, there was and remains the possibility of compromise in relations between Chechnya and Russia, Yandarbiyev said. And it must be sought with the honor and dignity of the Chechen people in mind.

"All previous proposals by the Russian and Chechen leaderships on relations between the sides, if they are equally acceptable to the sides, remain in force. Most important is the Chechens' sacred right to freedom and independence."

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] "Not long before the attack on Dzhokhar Dudayev, Boris Yeltsin talked of the possibility of peace talks with him. And the first steps had been taken in that direction. What future do the talks have now?"

[Yandarbiyev] "I am entirely privy to the deceased president's plans. Including those relating to talks. I know what terms he would have agreed to and what terms he would have sought for his part. Everything remains in force. We are ready for talks. But not until we at least have the results of the preliminary investigation by the inquiry task force of the Mlitary Prosecutor's Office, General Prosecutor's Office, and Internal Affairs Ministry of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria. The extent to which the Russian leadership was involved in the act is being established. If it is ascertained that Yeltsin or Chernomyrdin organized the attack through directives issued after 31 March, then there can be no question of any talks with them."

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] "In Chechen villages people have talked with me on several occasions about possible acts of retribution for Dudayev's death, including on Russian territory...."

[Yandarbiyev] "Yes, I am currently facing a hail of demands from commanders and fighters for retribution. And I have prepared an order: All actions must be

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carried out under the leadership of our armed forces' main staff."

It appears that the federal forces' commanders too have no doubt that they will win and that they have the potential to fight ad infinitum. This war is now more like an exchange of acts of retribution.

Russia: Chechen Minister: Yandarbiyev Merely 'a Pawn'

LD2604131796 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1208 GMT 26 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Oleg Artyushin]

[FBIS Translated Text] Groznyy, 26 Apr (ITAR-TASS) — The leadership of Chechnya said it wants to establish contacts with Aslan Maskhadov, chief of staff of the Chechen separatist formations. Abdula Bugayev, first deputy prime minister of the Chechen Government, said that "Maskhadov, Basayev, and Gelayev (the most influential field commanders — TASS) are the actual figures to be determining the situation in the Chechen Republic".

In an interview with ITAR-TASS today, Abdula Bugayev said that Dudayev's successor, Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, "has neither authority nor influence on the field commanders" and remains "a pawn covering an empty square".

The deputy prime minister said the gunmen have changed their combat tactics. From head-on clashes with the federal forces they are now moving to terrorism and acts of sabotage, first of all in the regions the population of which supports the idea of creating peace zones.

Russia: Top Chechen Commander Swears Loyalty to New President

AU2604165496 Paris AFP in English 1620 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Alleroy, Russia, April 26 (AFP) — Aslan Maskhadov, the top Chechen rebel military commander, has sworn his loyalty to Chechnya's new separatist president Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, an aide said on Friday [26 April].

"Maskhadov was here yesterday and he came out in support" of Yandarbiyev, said Maskhadov's aide Sulman Abayev in the rebel-held eastern village of Alleroy.

Since the death of Dzhokhar Dudayev, the charismatic founder of Chechnya's independence movement, in a Russian air raid five days ago, there has been speculation that the separatist leadership will collapse.

Rumours were fuelled by Maskhadovs' absence at the first press conference given by Yandarbyev on Thursday.

Maskhadov was unavailable Friday.

Yandarbiyev, a little known former writer, took over because he was vice-president in Dudayev's government.

High-ranking rebel sources in Alleroy said Yandarbiyev would only be able to keep power if he had the support of both Maskhadov and Shamyl Basayev, another top field commander who led a bloody raid and hostage-taking inside Russia last year.

"That's all that matters. If he has, them then everyone else will follow. Maskhadov has expressed his full support, so has Basayev," Abayev said.

Russia: Chechen Leader Zavgayev Assails Rebel Commander Maskhadov

LD2804180896 Moscow NTV in Russian 1500 GMT 28 Apr 96

[Report over video by unidentified correspondent, including recorded comments by Chechen leader Doku Zavgayev; from the "Segodnya" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Doku Zavgayev, The head of the official Chechen Government, has described the general situation as tense. The authorities have announced that leaflets containing threats against members of the government and personnel of the law enforcement bodies appeared in Groznyy today.

Federal posts were shelled in Groznyy 10 times yesterday. The Chechens also fired on troop positions around the settlements of Staryy Achkhoy, Orekhovo, and Vedeno. Zavgayev, nevertheless asserts that his forces are in control of the situation.

[Correspondent, over video of Zavgayev at news conference] A year ago, negotiations were still appropriate, though then, too, they were conducted under slogans proposed by Dudayev. Dudayev, Doku Gapurovich said, started the war against the people of Chechnya back in the autumn of 1991. Now, peace in the republic is the cause of the people of the republic, and since the people is one, there are no contracting parties who need to sit down at the negotiating table.

[Zavgayev] We have not had anyone to hold talks with. Let me tell you why. First, we are one people. The conflict now boils down to the situation within the Chechen people itself. What is needed now is meetings, explanatory work, the manifestation of good will, and honesty in relations.

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[Correspondent, over video of federal troops, Chechens in streets and in field] Meetings are being held regularly. Attempts are being made to persuade the fighters that sabotage, terrorist actions, and antigovernment rallies do not bring peace any closer. Zavgayev personally came out as the guarantor of safety for those who are prepared to lay down their weapons and who have no blood on their hands. He said thousands had broken with the fighters.

Members of the government of the Chechen Republic are maintaining contacts with authoritative field commanders.

[Zavgayev] We are making approaches to Ruslan Gelayev, to Khodzhi-Akhmed Geliskhanov, to Akhmed Zakayev. We talk to everyone. And they understand that they must put an end to senseless things.

[Correspondent] Doku Zavgayev assessed the political possibilities of these people as being very low. And he does not think that Aslan Maskhadov is capable of assuming a uniting function.

[Zavgayev] He is continuing to play the military leader, he just cannot admit to his own bankruptcy. I had respect for him when he served in the army, I knew him as a fellow countryman, as a military specialist he is a man who merits attention. But he has become involved in something he knows nothing about. He is not a politician, he cannot claim to be one, today. And, insofar as he has been engaged in politics, you can see his politics are littered with dead bodies with acts of terrorism.

[Correspondent] Zavgayev is convinced that after the death of Dudayev, there can be no leader among the fighters and it is pointless to seek such a man. Doku Gapurovich is convinced of his powers, and, it seems, is inclined to solve political problems without the particular participation of Moscow.

The change of terminology, or more precisely the change of tactics, in his view, fully coincide with Boris Yeltsin's program for a settling the Chechen crisis.

Russia: Official Warns of 'Catastrophe' From Chechen Oil Blaze

AU2604145396 Paris AFP in English
1422 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] MOSCOW, April 26 (AFP) — A Chechen oil well was ablaze Friday [26 April] following a machinegun attack by unknown assailants, sparking fears of an environmental disaster in the war-torn breakaway republic, a local official said.

Blazing oil from a well in the Grozniyenskaya region, south of the capital Groznyy, was shooting tens of metres into the air, said Zaindy Durdiyev of the Russian fuel and energy ministry in Chechnya.

"The volume of oil which is escaping has reached such levels that we're looking at an imminent ecological catastrophe in Chechnya," Durdiyev said, adding that the losses in oil alone amounted to as much as $300,000 per day.

"Our ministry does not have the equipment, the means or the power to stop the blaze," Durdiyev said, adding that he had only been able to mobilise 15 professional firefighters.

Unidentified gunmen sprayed the well with gunfire overnight Thursday, causing the loss of 2,500 tonnes [metric tons] of oil a day, he said, quoted by Russian news agencies. [passage omitted]

Russia: Civilians Flee Shali in Fear of Federal Army Attack

AU2604165096 Paris AFP in English
1626 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Near Shali, Russia, April 26 — More than 1,000 Chechen women and children fled Shali on Friday [26 April] after a helicopter attack a day earlier sparked fears that encircling troops would storm the southeastern Chechen town.

The women, carrying their children and sacks of belongings, had to walk about 12 kilometers (seven miles) through Russian paratroopers surrounding the town which has been totally blocked to traffic in and out, including journalists, for over a week.

At dawn on Thursday, helicopter gunships destroyed eight houses belonging to known independence movement leaders and organisers of a daily pro-independence demonstration in central Shali, a town of 30,000, a separatist source outside the town said.

Giorgio Negro, a representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) who had just left the town, said that four people were injured by shrapnel in the rocket attacks, including one woman.

"Eight houses were hit directly," Negro said, adding that the attacks had been accurately targeted at certain buildings.

"But of course there are also women and children in those houses," he said, adding that Russian artillery guns have also been firing into the outskirts of the town, without causing injury.

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Refugees fleeing Shali said that there had been at least 11 injuries, including three children and four women.

No men were in the vast column of refugees.

"The men are not allowed out. If they approach the Russian posts they are turned back or, worse, shot or arrested," said Zaza Surayeva, 34.

"I'm just getting my children out of there and then I'm going back. If they're going to attack, then I'll die with my family, my menfolk," she said, holding a small child.

"After helicopters attacked yesterday we waited at the Russian post all day to be let out but they refused. They wanted money from us and they fired guns in front of us, hitting the ground," she said.

Russian authorities have said that hundreds of rebel fighters are living in Shali, a contention the refugees all denied.

Although Shali is relatively calm for now, similar scenarios have previously turned into pitched battles with Russian forces demanding the surrender of alleged fighters, and then flattening villages with artillery and aerial bombing.

Troops at a checkpoint north of Germechuk, a village two kilometres (one miles) from Sha'i, kept control of hundreds of women trying to get back into the town by firing into the air and releasing a smoke canister.

"Get back, I repeat get back or I'll open fire," a soldier shouted trough a megaphone.

A soldier then fired repeated bursts of automatic rifle bullets over the heads of the crowd, reloaded his weapon and threatened : "Now I'm going to shoot properly."

A journalist for WTN television company and a SIPA agency photographer had their films confiscated by troops.

Russia: Chechen Militants Attack Argun

LD2704063196 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0544 GMT 27 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Oleg Artyushin]

[FBIS Translated Text] Groznyy, 27 April — Approximately 120 militants attacked the town of Argun last night. According to Chechnya's Interior Ministry, the militants were led by Abu Khamzatov, a brother of militant leader Alaudi Khamzatov who was killed several months ago and who also carried out attacks on Argun.

The attack began at 0400 in the morning. The militants managed to seize the building of the town's interior ministry department and disarm 20 militiamen who were in the building at the time. Prior to this, a shot was fired at the building from a grenade thrower. Weapons and communication equipment was taken from the building.

Another attack was carried out on facilities of the Kubanagrochernobylstroy company [Kuban agricultural Chernobyl construction] and the Omskpromstroy company [Omsk industrial construction] which are engaged in the restoration of the town.

A security guard at the Kubanagrochernobylstroy managed to lead 15 workers out of the building to safety.

There has been no information on casualties. The building of the prefecture has been damaged.

Russia: Police Blame Raid on Argun on Rebels From Shali

LD2704184596 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1840 GMT 27 Apr 96

[By Oleg Artyushin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Groznyy, April 27 (Itar-Tass) — Chechnya's First Deputy Interior Minister Yuriy Plugin said that the overnight attack on the town of Argun might have been carried out by rebels who had sneaked out from the village of Shali sealed off by Russian troops.

In an interview with Itar-Tass on Saturday, Plugin said that the rebels led by Abu Khamzatov who had attacked Argun acted in a "combined" mobile and well armed group.

According to Plugin, they moved in cars and were armed with automatic firearms and grenade launchers and had communications equipment.

He believes that they traveled by secondary roads to avoid Russian road blocks.

Speaking about the motives of their raid on Argun, Plugin said that "it is unlikely that they were interested in arms" because they had returned one of the submachine guns they had seized from captured policemen.

Plugin tends to belief that the rebels "were just flexing their muscles."

Interestingly enough, there are 110 policemen in Argun. On the day of the attack, at least 62 armed policemen were on duty, less the sick, but none of them tried to resist the assailants and surrendered their arms.

Commenting on this, Plugin said that "there is something special about it which needs to be studied."

Speaking about the situation in Shali, Plugin described it as calm on the whole. According to Shali's police chief, there are still about 20 rebels in the village.

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Russia: Yandarbiyev Said Killed in 'Firefight Between Rebels'

LD2904092596 Moscow 2x2 Television in Russian 0900 GMT 29 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A report just in: Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, who took over from Dzhokhar Dudayev when the latter was killed last week, was himself killed last night. This was reported to RIA-NOVOSTI by a senior official in Doku Zavgayev's government, who requested not to be named.

According to the source, Yandarbiyev was killed during a night-time firefight between rebels in the town of Urus-Martan, RIA-NOVOSTI reports.

This information has not yet been confirmed by other sources.

Russia: Military Have No Verified Data on Yandarbiyev's Death

LD2904102696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1009 GMT 29 Apr 96

[By Boris Kipkeyev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW April 29 (Itar-Tass) — The Russian military in Chechnya failed to confirm the reported death of new Chechen separatist leader Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, who was reportedly killed overnight in a clash between warring militants near the town of Urus-Martan, to the south of Groznyy.

A spokesman of the Russian command in Chechnya told Tass by telephone on Monday that "the military so far have no verified data about the death of acting president of the so-called republic of Ichkeria".

However, the spokesman said that "everything happening of late in the camp of the separatists, including the death of Dudayev, was the result of inter-Chechen gangland war".

Economic Issues

Russia: Livshits Sees Election Uncertainty Hurting Economy

MM2604134896 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 25 Apr 96 pp 1-2

[Report by Nikita Vaynonen: "Aleksandr Livshits: The Preelection Situation Is Having a Grave Effect on the Economy"]

[FBIS Translated Text] "Russia's Economy and the Presidential Elections" was the title which Aleksandr Livshits, economics aide to the Russian Federation president, gave to his [23 April] speech to local television and radio company journalists who had gathered at the Presidential Staff Press Center to participate in the work of the AGENSTVO REGIONALNOY PRESSY [Regional Press Agency]. And it must be said that he had every reason to directly link these two themes: The continuation of the reforms and the fate of those absolutely tangible gains which, although they are not yet obvious to everybody, give Russia the chance of a civilized future, are in the balance.

Yeltsin's and Zyuganov's programs, as A. Livshits put it, are 180 degrees apart — the distance between certainty and uncertainty, responsibility and irresponsibility. It is clear that before the elections nobody wants to run the risk of investing money in the economy. Interest rates beyond the middle of June are close to twice those prior to then. Furthermore, in general nobody wants to issue credits or conduct transactions involving securities if repayment is due after the elections. As a result we are losing enormous amounts of money which could have been gone to servicemen, doctors, teachers, pensioners. All foreign investments have stopped completely. The Ministry of Finance has prepared everything necessary to obtain IMF credits. Surely Russia receiving these trillions in a month's time would not hurt anyone? The facts cited by A. Livshits unequivocally testify that the preelection situation is having a very grave impact on the economy and the continuation of the reforms, but at the same time a victory for Boris Yeltsin would immediately take the brakes off. In the presidential aide's words, this would be gigantic progress.

It is not even so much Zyuganov's election platform in itself as its utter vagueness that is acting as a constraint on investment and business activity, in the presidential aide's view.

Everything about Yeltsin is clear. Although his program has not yet been published its main content is clear from the president's message to the Russian Federation Federal Assembly. First, firmly protecting people's socioeconomic rights; second, channeling cash flows into production. This is precisely why a persistent fight against inflation is needed: If there is inflation, there is nothing to channel into production. But what do the Communists have to say? First, we will roll up our sleeves and start to overcome the crisis.... They can roll up their trouser-legs if they like, the question remains — how are they going to go about it? Second, we will adopt socialist political economy as a guide to action. , Admittedly terms like a mixed economy are also employed. But what specifically does it mean? There was a mixed economy under both Stalin and Brezhnev; they have one in America too. With the Communists the main thing — protection of owners' rights — is missing. Finally, the third and most specific part of their program: revising economic policy, cutting

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taxes, and increasing expenditure. "I call this a party of inflation or a party of the weakening ruble," A. Livshits said. And, in his words, this concept is considerably broader that the CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation]: Zyuganov's support is rooted in the old Russian economy's addiction to injections of money, a drug whose effects are a temporary remission followed by even more terrible withdrawal symptoms. Everything else in the Communists' platform is verbal modeling clay, which you can mold into any shape you like.

A. Livshits cited a startling fact: An enterprise sent the president a telegram saying: Set the dollar exchange rate at 8,000 rubles [R], and our entire collective will vote for you! This is not Communist rhetoric, not even social demagoguery, it is nothing but the inertia of old dependency habits in the economy — the thing that is most holding Russia back! There is only one way out — investing in economic growth without inflation or printing money, but these are precisely the steps which are currently being held back by the preelection situation.

A typical example: The USSR owed foreign creditors $70 billion, while third countries owe us 100 billion. Russia is on the verge of joining the Paris Club — as a creditor, not a debtor. Currently the people who owe us money say: We owe the USSR, not Russia. But if Russia joins the Club they will have to address the issue in earnest and this speculative argument will not work. The money we would receive would be an enormous boost to our economy and to the social sphere. The question is: Will the Communists wish to recognize the USSR's debts? What will their financial policy be in the event they come to power? There are things they have said outright — we will introduce a state planning committee, freeze prices.... The uncertainty, A. Livshits said, is creating a situation which it is very difficult to keep under control. But we are doing so nevertheless.

In this connection he dwelled on a question which worries many people. There are fears that wage payment month, which is what March was declared to be, has passed, and that things will fall apart again in the future. As of this morning (23 April), the presidential aide said, 76 percent of April's federal wages had been paid. We will cover all regional transfer payments. Pension arrears will have been fully paid by 1 May. The tight control of payments will be continued — this is not a preelection measure but a constant state concern.

In March, A. Livshits reported, R23.5 trillion in real money went out of the federal budget without the printing presses being used once. This enormous amount was roughly distributed as follows: 15 percent into foreign currency and the rest into boosting effective demand and citizen's savings. There is no doubt, either, about the positive effect for the economy, particularly consumer goods production and imports. It is very important, the presidential aide stressed, that the experience of organizing these payments has forced all federal organs in the area in question — the Finance Ministry, the Prosecutor's Office, the Federal Treasury, the Federal Labor Inspectorate — to perform effectively in this direction. Around 2,000 lawsuits for the payment of wages have been won with the aid of the Prosecutor's Office alone. Some budget items had to be redistributed, of course, but actually this is maybe the most valuable part of the experience gained: Maybe the budget itself should from the start have been such that the residual principle for funding applied not to the social sphere, culture, education, and so forth, but to ineffective production, administrative, and other expenditure. March provided us with the prototype of a normal budget, A. Livshits concluded. He also assured the journalists about the securities market: It will be sustained; there will be no cataclysms.

Of course, he was asked about his impressions of his contacts with Yeltsin. I will cite his answer almost verbatim: "The president has a huge soft heart. He reacts very intensely to everything and takes things very much to heart, so when I tell him something unpleasant I also try to say immediately what I am going to do about it. It's very easy to work with him. Yeltsin is completely lacking in the arrogance and conceit typical of our previous leaders."

Russia: Computer Market Seen Awaiting Election Outcome

MM2904083896 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 26 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Sergey Leskov: "Russian Computer Market Comes to a Halt at Critical Point"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Comtech-96 computer exhibition is on in Moscow until Friday. It is the largest event of its kind in our country. This year Comtech surpassed the well-known exhibitions in Southeast Asia in terms of the number of participants and visitors to rank third in the world after the U.S. Comdex and the German CeBit.

The size of the exhibition is not regrettably proof of our computerization. In the United States 50 percent of families have a home computer, while in Europe the figure is around 20 percent. According to the most optimistic estimates, only one in 10 families in Moscow (way ahead of the rest of Russia) has a "PC." Integrated information systems in state offices, which are more familiar than lunch to the Western official, are as remote

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as a romantic dream. And, as one of our "computer kings" said, "the standard of the exhibition does not match the real state of affairs."

Computer experts who are being drafted into enterprises of every caliber are conscious of macroeconomic fluctuations. The computer market plummeted dramatically after December's parliamentary elections. The leaders of many enterprises, fearing economic upheaval after the presidential election, are sending spare funds westward....

It is funny, but the threat of the restoration of socialism does not cause panic among those who should at first glance be quaking with fear. Major Western firms are in a good mood. Intel, the world leader in the production of microprocessors, is seeing turnover in the CIS rise year in, year out. IBM intends to bring turnover in the CIS to $1 billion by the year 2000. Compaq's rate of growth in the Russian market is three times that of European indicators. The "big names" are safeguarded against all manner of conflicts by their diversity and their monopoly of a number of fundamental areas.

The prime question, which preys on you as you wander around Comtech, is whether Russia can organize production of modern computers on its own. Whether our programmers can write the kind of programs that bring full value for "money." And is it feasible for it to produce decent spares, motherboards, and microprocessors?

The last question is the simplest to answer. We seem to be terminally lagging behind here. When it comes to chips we have not even invented the "bicycle" yet. Although Taiwan, to spite these calculations, organized production of its own microchips from scratch in a matter of years. But the island received the kind of investment of which we cannot even dream.

As for software, we can often proudly rank ourselves among the leaders. In all fairness, only partly in terms of unique, one-off developments. Our legions of programmers cannot produce a mass product of a world standard (the exception being the Tetris game and antivirus programs).

Lastly, production. Although national producers are backed by a law which requires state enterprises to procure equipment from the domestic market, that is an extremely risky business. The all-powerful IBM has closed its production unit in Zelenograd and IVK, which started off well, is experiencing difficulties. Their mistake lay in directing their efforts to state enterprises and state orders. But success is possible if you deal with the mass customer and place the emphasis on home computers, as the private enterprise VIST [expansion unknown], which leases premises from the Kvant plant in Zelenograd, has found. In 1996, having doubled its capacities again, VIST will produce 300,000 computers and rank among the top 10 European producers. Intel is supplying the plant with the latest chips along with shipments to producers in West Europe. The VIST computers cost 20-30 percent less than Western technology of the same standard.

World experience does, however, indicate that Russia's computer future is to be determined not by these isolated examples or by the firm positions espoused by the foreign giants but by the prosperity of small and medium-sized firms. They are at a critical point. Even if the "revamped Communists" have ceased to be the ideological enemies of computerization, activity on the market will not recover for a few months to come....

Russia: Moscow's Efforts To Pay Off Back Wages in Line With Budget

LD2604163096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1438 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 26 (INTERFAX) — The Russian government's efforts to pay off back wages and pensions are in strict accordance with the 1996 budget, Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin told Russian regional media in Moscow Friday.

Chernomyrdin categorically denied the possibility of curbing the present economic course in the second half of the year due to the considerable social payments in the first half.

"All of these funds come from noninflationary sources only," he stated. "Everything will depend on whether we have enough not to step across the line.

"We will as long as we are in power," he said.

Chernomyrdin said he did not doubt that President Boris Yeltsin would be re-elected for a second term. "Yeltsin is the only person in the country capable of bringing the reforms to the end," he said. "Yeltsin and no one else can do that."

Such qualities as comprehensive preparation, a strong will, the ability to work under pressure and his colossal experience of production, party and state activities will enable Yeltsin to win the elections, he said.

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International Affairs

Ukraine: Kuchma Questioned by Council of Europe Parliamentarians

WS2604145296 Kiev KIYEVSKIYE VEDOMOSTI in Russian 25 Apr 96 pp 1,4

[Report by Tetyana Melnychuk: "Parliamentarians From the Council of Europe Were Satisfied With Leonid Kuchma's Report. However, Many of Their Questions Did Not Receive Full Answers"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On the eve of Leonid Kuchma's report to a plenary meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe [PACE], a few observers anticipated quite a fierce squabble. They like to ask tough questions in the conference room at the Palace of Europe, and our president, as leader of Ukrainian socialists Ivan Chyzh said, does not like to answer questions.

Yet, there was no squabble. Judging by all signs, the parliamentarians liked the well-written report by the Ukrainian president. As Miguel Martinez, PACE member and its former president, said while answering KIYEVSKIYE VEDOMOSTI's questions after the meeting (by the way, he did a lot for Ukraine's accession to the Council of Europe and received the Ukrainian president's higher award — the Order of Yaroslav the Wise), Leonid Kuchma made a very positive impression as a "particular type of politician" and a "firm, calm, and experienced head of state."

During the course of 40 minutes Leonid Kuchma was asked over 20 questions. He responded quite confidently to the majority of them, and either bypassed or provided extremely brief answers to unexpected ones. Perhaps the president and his adviser should have selected a less dry and telegraphic style for his answers.

Despite certain forecasts, most questions asked by the Europarliamentarians (and later by journalists) did not concern the course of reforms in Ukraine, but primarily Ukraine's relations with Russia and the possibility of its accession to all kinds of commonwealths, unions, and communities on the territory of the former USSR. There were also many questions concerning Chernobyl and the issue of abolishing the death penalty in Ukraine.

As for relations between Ukraine and Russia, in the opinion of Miguel Martinez, the president fully clarified the situation. This was very useful because certain PACE members, for some reason, think that "Ukraine is going to become Russia's great enemy" and a "particular barrier to protect the West from Russia." Having assured that we want to make friends with Russia, as well as with our other neighbors, Leonid Kuchma, as usual, added that Ukraine is against establishing any supranational structures. Moreover, as it appeared from our president's words, all the new formations of the CIS will meet the same fate as the anemic body itself — inertia, and thus, no need to exist. (By the way, Leonid Kuchma said in his report that Ukraine's strategic goal is to join the EU.)

Explaining why no political treaty has yet been signed between our country and Russia, and why Boris Yeltsin is not going to Kiev, Leonid Kuchma emphasized that Ukraine will never agree to the wording "Sevastopol is a base of the Russian Federation Black Sea Fleet." At the same time, he refuted the allegation that the talks on the Black Sea Fleet have come to a standstill. "A solution will certainly be found; moreover, it will be found with Boris Yeltsin," our president confidently asserted.

As much as by Russian-Ukrainian relations, the parliamentarians were also worried about the problem of closing the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. In certain questions one could even hear accusations that although we have promised to close the Chernobyl power plant by the year 2000, our agreement with the G-7 is not being implemented. The president had something to say about this issue. "We have never approached the solution to this problem as closely as at the G-7 summit in Moscow, at which the G-7 countries confirmed that they would pay for closing the power units and putting into operation compensating capacities and alternative sources of energy supply," Leonid Kuchma said, and emphasized that Ukraine's fulfillment of its commitments concerning the Chernobyl power plant's closure would depend on the West's fulfillment of the agreements reached in Moscow. So far — the president bitterly smiled — the promised money "wanders about in the West, but on paper and not in the form of hard currency in Ukraine." Yet another thing is important: The promised money is not a "handout" for Ukraine, but loans which will be used to close the Chernobyl nuclear power plant.

What was perhaps the only serious point in the president's answers was the issue of the death penalty in Ukraine. The meticulous Europarliamentarians dug out a few of recent examples of pronouncing death sentences (incidentally, Ukraine has never obliged itself to not pronounce death sentences, but only not to carry them out.) They also recalled in plain terms that a part of the PACE had been against admitting Ukraine to the Council of Europe, and were interested in whether our country is going to meet all of its commitments concerning the ban on the death penalty. Yes, we will meet them, the president stated. For some reason, however, he did not explain that we will not be able to do it soon because the public is not yet ready for this: There are still maniacs with 52 victims on their conscience in Ukraine. Perhaps such arguments would have been more convincing for the Europarliamentarians. Never-

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theless, in the opinion of Miguel Martinez, "the president managed to convince those whom he was supposed to convince."

Ukraine: Leaders Say NATO Membership Could Threaten Independence

MS2604123296 London INDEPENDENT in English 26 Apr 96 p 10

[Report by Tony Barber: "Nato Overtures Place Ukraine In Strategic Dilemma"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev — To the west lies Nato, apparently dedicated to expanding into eastern Europe. To the east lies Russia, apparently determined to bring back most former Soviet republics under its influence.

No wonder these are troubling times for Ukraine, a country of 52 million people that has barely recovered from the surprise of gaining independence in 1991 before discovering that it risks turning into a flashpoint between two new Western and Eastern blocs.

Nato's enlargement clearly seems attractive to governments in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, keen to lock themselves permanently into Western institutions. But for leaders in Kiev the expansion of the Atlantic alliance is a process which, if mishandled, could threaten the integrity and independence of the Ukrainian state itself.

Despite Western assurances that Nato's enlargement will not threaten Russia, President Boris Yeltsin and his advisers have indicated that the Kremlin will react vigorously if Nato goes ahead. Seen from Ukraine, the greatest concern is that Moscow will seek to accelerate the political and military integration of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the loose association of newly sovereign countries that replaced the Soviet Union.

Under President Leonid Kuchma, and his predecessor, Leonid Kravchuk, Ukraine has opposed closer integration of the CIS, fearing it as a first step to being dragged back under Moscow's control. Leaders took it as a bad sign when Mr Yeltsin issued a decree last September that envisaged the transformation of the CIS into a Russian led security alliance.

Matters have grown even more serious for Ukraine this year. The Russian parliament's condemnation of the treaty that abolished the Soviet Union was quickly followed by the announcement of a new union between Russia and Belarus, a pro-Russian state which borders Ukraine.

Then Mr Yeltsin postponed a visit to Kiev on the grounds that Ukraine was delaying an agreement on how to divide up the former Soviet Black Sea fleet, based in the Ukrainian peninsula of Crimea. To crown everything, Mr Yeltsin's chief opponent in next June's presidential election in Russia, Gennady Zyuganov, is a Communist who stands for the Soviet Union's restoration, albeit by peaceful means.

Significantly, all these implicit threats to Ukraine's independence have emerged even before Nato has set out a precise timetable for incorporating Poland and other states. Assuming that it eventually announces such a timetable, there are several ways for Russia to tighten the screw on Ukraine. One is to deploy extra Russian military forces in Belarus. Another is to exploit Ukraine's dependence on Russia for oil and gas. A third point of vulnerability for Ukraine lies in the fact that ethnic Russian majorities who are not noticeably enthusiastic about Ukrainian statehood dominate Crimea and parts of eastern Ukraine.

Mr Yeltsin has avoided playing these cards, but it is easy to imagine a tougher Russian policy in the event of Nato's expansion, especially if the next president in the Kremlin is not a reformer. With Ukrainian nationalism enjoying its strongest support in western Ukraine, there is an obvious risk that Nato's enlargement, coupled with a hardline Russian response, could jeopardise unity.

Faced with this prospect, officials in Kiev say Nato should take the utmost care, when expanding, not to isolate Russia or undermine Ukraine's security. Best of all, according to Deputy Foreign Minister, Konstyantyn Hyshchenko, would be for Nato to transform itself into a "Euro-Atlantic security organisation" that would include Russia and Ukraine. UNCLAS 3F/LD

Ukraine: U.S. Ambassador Stresses 'Rule of Law' for Economy

WS2904082096 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 0047 GMT 29 Apr 96

["Commentary" titled: "Rule of Law in Ukraine the Essential Element of a Prosperous Economy," by William Green Miller, ambassador of the United States to Ukraine]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The international business community believes now, because of steady progress in legal and economic reform by the government of Ukraine, that Ukraine offers long-term opportunities for foreign trade and investments. Ukraine is now in the position of attracting several large-scale breakthrough U.S. investments that, if rapidly concluded, would have very high international visibility and attract a further sustainable stream of investments.

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At the same time, an increasing number of small and medium U.S. companies have entered the Ukrainian market and many more continue to show keen interest in taking part in the economic development of one of the largest "new" markets that has emerged on the global scene in decades.

The rigorous economic reforms undertaken by the government of Ukraine go hand in hand with the growing need to engage the international business community to work with the government of Ukraine in improving the standard of living and prosperity of Ukraine's citizens. The government of Ukraine, despite great hardships, has persevered with budgetary and monetary discipline, which has brought financial and monetary stabilization. Combined with a renewed effort to bring about fundamental structural changes in the economy, particularly the transfer of a sizable proportion of economic assets to the private sector, Ukraine is laying the foundation for long-term growth and development internally and internationally.

Key to this transformation to a new economy with a significant private sector will be the establishment of a sound basis for investment, both domestic and foreign. The most important pillar of this foundation is the establishment of the rule of law and the adoption of its basic concepts by the both the public and private sectors of Ukraine. To achieve this objective, four steps must be taken:

First and foremost, a new constitution must be adopted that is fully supported by the people of Ukraine. There will be no clearer signal to the world and to the international business community that a sound legal framework has been put in place to guide the internal and external behavior of this new country on the basis of the highest standards of civic society under the rule of law.

Second, the civil code now under consideration, based as it is on the principle of human rights and private ownership of property, should be accepted as a building block of relationships among the people of Ukraine. The code, which in its draft form includes codification of principles of commercial relationships, will set, if approved, reasonable bounds for domestic and foreign business activity in Ukraine.

Third, sound investment projects, both domestic and foreign, should be protected by government policies and laws that are aimed at stimulating creative growth and not subject to radical changes in direction or emphasis. Laws that are designed to attract foreign investment, with appropriate conditions and incentives, should not be later and unpredictably changed by countermanding decrees or procedures that fundamentally alter the original legislation.

Fourth, business disputes and disagreements between business entities must be able to be decided through a process of fair legal judgment. Such legal judgments can only be provided by an effective court system. This must be set in place in Ukraine if normal, predictable agreements are to be part of the normal business landscape. Ukraine has already made notable improvements, particularly in the training of arbitration court judges, but considerable effort lies ahead. Access to the court system, a sound appellate process, and, throughout all stages, a transparent, open system of legal redress, are essential ingredients for developing the degree of confidence required by the international business community to be able to work in the Ukrainian commercial environment.

These four steps would result in a considerable increase in foreign investment and promote Ukrainian domestic business development as well. The work done by the people of Ukraine to nurture and develop Ukraine's economic prosperity can be considerably helped by a sound foreign direct investment policy in Ukraine under a fair legal system that guarantees just and equitable treatment to all. A prosperous economy is the most vital requirement of Ukraine's sovereignty and independence as a democratic nation and a civil society.

Ukraine: Kuchma, UN Official Discuss Crimean Tatars' Problems

WS2904074496 Kiev UKRINFORM in English 0750 GMT 29 Apr 96

[From the "Current Events" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] According to reports from the press center of the Ukrainian Presidential Administration, Ukraine's President Leonid Kuchma received United Nations' Deputy Secretary- General Raffuddin Ahmed in Kiev on April 26. Discussions between Mr. Kuchma and Mr. Ahmed, who is currently on an official visit to Ukraine, focused on the problems facing the Crimean Tatars. The United Nations' deputy secretary-general briefed the Ukrainian president on the outcome of his visit to Simferopol, where he participated in the opening of the offices of the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the Turkish Agency for International Development, his meetings with Crimean government officials, Crimean Tartars leaders, and Crimean Tartar settlers. Mr. Ahmed said that the UN's special regional development program is aimed at the integration of all displaced people and not only the Crimean Tartars. Mr. Kuchma said that his country is doing everything in its power to provide

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assistance to former deportees. He called on CIS governments and on a number of Muslim nations to assist in resettling the people. He also thanked Mr. Ahmed for his efforts in resolving the problems of displaced peoples on Ukrainian territory as well as in international activities commemorating the tenth anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear accident.

Ukraine: Foreign Minister Udovenko Addresses Black Sea Forum

LD2704180096 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1615 GMT 27 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Bucharest — Addressing the 7th conference of Black Sea Economic Cooperation foreign ministers today, Ukrainian Foreign Affairs Minister Hennadiy Udovenko praised the Black Sea Economic Cooperation's stabilizing role in the region and urged Black Sea Economic Cooperation member states to step up efforts to boost economic cooperation in the Black Sea area.

Udovenko said Ukraine supported the program for the development of a common transport network among Black Sea Economic Cooperation countries, and noted progress in the response to Kiev's proposal for a common investment area in the region.

He stressed, however, that the search for finance to support cooperation programs remained an urgent problem. The launch of the Black Sea trade and cooperation bank, for example, had been delayed in the face of economic difficulties in some Black Sea Economic Cooperation countries, including Ukraine. Udovenko called for "collective decision-making" regarding the bank's capital fund and the development of industry-specific programs.

Tonight, Hennadiy Udovenko will address a meeting of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation business forum on stability and security in the Black Sea.

Ukraine: Government Seeks Part in Bosnian Economic Reconstruction

AU2904083396 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 25 Apr 96 p 5

[Report by Anatoliy Martsynovskyy: "Bosnia: The Difficult Days of Peace" — first paragraph published in a box]

[FBIS Translated Text] Last week, a Ukrainian Foreign Ministry delegation headed by Deputy Minister Volodymyr Khandohiy paid an official visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina — for the first time since the establishment of diplomatic relations with that country.

The visit pursued two objectives: An intensification of the bilateral Ukrainian-Bosnian relations and a call upon the Ukrainian 240th peacekeeping battalion deployed in the area of Sarajevo. Volodymyr Khandohiy met with the leadership of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation, and statements were made on the readiness for cooperation. For Bosnia-Herzegovina, their internal problems — political and economic — continue to be of the utmost importance. In the state, which, in accordance with the Dayton accords, must be united, there are three illegitimate structures: The Serb Republic, occupying 49 percent of the territory; the Muslim Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the Croat Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia. The latter two are united to form a Muslim-Croat federation, however, this union is, so far, formal rather than real. There are still too many questions to be clarified, because there are regular clashes between the Croat and Muslim communities.

By the end of April, power must be handed over to the federal bodies, and the creation of single financial and banking systems, customs bodies, and a single budget of the federation is planned. The leadership of the federation must present its proposals on the borders between the Bosnian communities for international expert analysis. However, these are but projects, and one has to treat the prospects for their implementation with caution in view of the existing differences. The structure involving the Serbs and the Bosnia-Herzegovina federation looks as obscure, precisely as was planned in Dayton [yak i zaplanovano v Deytoni].

However, Ukraine is rather interested in other Bosnian problems: The restoration of its economy, or more accurately, participation in the restoration. The present volume of industrial production in Bosnia is 4 percent of that before war, just one in every 100 Bosnians has a permanent job, 80 percent of the population depends upon foreign humanitarian assistance, and more than 40 percent of the housing is in ruins. Two-thirds of all production capacities are destroyed, there is not a single functioning railroad that would connect Bosnia with neighboring states (this data is for the Muslim-Croat federation, but the situation in the Serb Republic is no better). On 1 June, an international program for rebuilding Bosnia-Herzegovina is to be presented in Sarajevo. The work will be financed, in particular, by the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and special funds of the European Union. The head of the World Bank European Bureau, Abdulla al-Maharufi [name as transliterated], stated that, over the next three years, more than $5 billion will have to be spent on rebuilding the Bosnian economy. Moreover, $2 billion will be needed this year. Of course, somebody must put these funds to good use, and Ukraine's interest lies precisely in this. This is what Volodymyr Khandohiy is saying:

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"We stated about our readiness to take part in rebuilding the devastated economy of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The necessary political and diplomatic foundation has been created, and it is now up to entrepreneurs to say the word. It would be practical to strengthen ties between the chambers of commerce and industry of both states. Incidentally, Bosnia is very much interested in resuming cooperation with Ukraine."

It may be added to this that Ukraine, which took an active part in peacekeeping operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina and which suffered considerable economic losses as a result of the sanctions and embargo against the warring parties, has the right to participate in the rebuilding of Bosnia. However, business does not make provisions for this, and entrepreneurship has to be at the forefront.

National Affairs

Ukraine: Kuchma Praises Heroism of Chernobyl Personnel

LD2604144296 Kiev UT-1 Television Network in Ukrainian 1030 GMT 26 Apr 96

[Speech by Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma made during a fund-raising telethon; date and place not given — live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dear citizens of Ukraine and the other countries of the world. Chernobyl is a constant pain and a never-healing wound for the Ukrainian people. It is a disaster that knows no borders or boundaries. The dark April days of the worst ecological and technical catastrophe became a turning-point in the history of mankind. Chernobyl does not have a past — it is a timeless tragedy. Ten long years have passed since we started out on the Chernobyl course. All of us have suffered. All of this time the bells of Chernobyl are still tolling. They are warning us of the dangers of the uncontrolled atom.

Today we must pay tribute to those who were among the first to step into the atomic hell and who shielded our planet from the unpredictable with their own bodies. The world should not forget their courage and their unprecedented heroism.

We thank those who risked their lives to stop the race of the atom capable of destroying everything on the face of the Earth. There are 350,000 of these heroes living in Ukraine itself. What about the Russians, the Belarusians, and the others? Many of them are already gone. We should not forget our fellow citizens who were forced to leave their ancestral lands and graves, their homes and working places because of the shadow of Chernobyl. They had to survive the strain of starting a new life.

We would like to thank the foreign countries, the international organizations, and tens of thousands of people who supported us at a time of need and who continue to help us now. We thank all those who realized what really happened on 26 April 1986. This is very important because the truth about the causes, the scale, and the effect of the Chernobyl catastrophe was unknown.

Ukraine became an area of ecological disaster. After the break- up of the Soviet Union it was left alone to face its problems. We can say with confidence that the Chernobyl disaster became a personal matter of the Ukrainian people. Under economic hardships, taking on the task of restructuring our society, we are forced to deny ourselves even the necessary minimum and spend 12 percent of our budget costs on healing the Chernobyl wound. In the last three years we have spent more than $3 billion on this task. This amount is five times bigger than our expenses on education, medicine, and culture. For Ukraine this is too much to bear. Moreover, we do not even know how much longer we have to carry this cross.

The scale of the disaster calls for an adequate response from the world community to help us to minimize the effects of the disaster. It is not only our own lives that are at stake — it is the future of all mankind. The Ukrainian president raised this issue at the G-7 summit in Moscow. The leading industrial nations agreed to help Ukraine with more than $3 billion to close the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. The G-7 countries and the European community will discuss the possibility of financing the creation of a new sarcophagus. This was made possible because of Ukraine's policy of ridding the planet of nuclear weapons and strengthening the world security system. As strange as it may seem, it was the Chernobyl disaster that focussed the world's attention on the country's problems. It showed the interdependency of our civilization. We have reached a stage of development when only mutual aid guarantees the future generation a safe life free of similar disasters.

Dear fellow citizens, in times of trouble such as these we have always shown the strength, patience, and bravery to overcome all odds. The world owes its survival to you and to all the people of good will. Much has been done and more will be done to ensure that the glowing sarcophagus, the 30-km zone, and the contaminated soil should not remain Ukraine's sole symbols. I believe in our people, in our intelligence and potential. I believe that we will win in our struggle for a prosperous future.

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Ukraine: Chernobyl Director Calls For Second Shell for Reactor

LD2604213996 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1600 GMT 26 Apr 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer Svetlana Sorokina] About 6,000 staff currently work at the Chernobyl nuclear electric power station [AES], even though their daily labors are no longer labelled heroic. In each of our "Vesti" bulletins today we are presenting a report by our correspondent Roman Babayan on the situation at the station and within the 30-km zone around it. Here is another of those reports from Chernobyl.

[Begin recording] [Babayan] The world-famous No. 4 reactor at the Chernobyl AES is encased by a so-called sarcophagus, whose official description is containment installation. It is the size of a 16-storey building, most of whose areas are completely inaccessible. In spite of this, dozens of Chernobyl workers go into the containment installation every day in order to carry out special work. According to the latest reports, about 100 tonnes of nuclear fuel remains inside there. Most of it is Uranium-235. However, these figures are highly approximate. [video shows reactor No. 4 and sarcophagus; station personnel walking along corridor; turbine hall; control room]

[Serhiy Parashyn, general director of Chernobyl AES, identified by caption] It is impossible to know for sure because, of course, we still do not have 100 percent access. I think that the containment installation...[pauses] We need a second shell. A second shell will create all the conditions for all this lengthy, serious work to be done. This will probably take several decades.

[Babayan] The construction of the second shell could cost several billion dollars. But Ukraine does not have this sort of money. Parashyn believes the AES should not be closed, nor is its closure necessary. Even when working below full capacity, the Chernobyl station generates six percent of Ukraine's annual electricity production. The revenue from its operation comes to $300 million.

[Parashyn] Since this is what the West is demanding, the West must take corresponding measures, financial ones for example.

[Babayan] Only two of the four reactors are operating at the AES today. The station's second set was shut down after the recent fire in the turbine hall. The station's first reactor has been in service for 19 years already, the second 18 years, and the third 13 years. At the time of the accident the No. 4 unit had been in service for only 900 days. As things stand at the moment, all the station's employees are convinced that a second disaster is impossible here. [video shows electronic diagram of reactor cap]

[V. Zhitnyy, shiftleader at station] It is now hard even to force a breach of the regulations to take place. Rather it is the other way round. Maybe we have gone too far in places. We will not be breaking the rules, contravening anything.

[Babayan] A new safety system has now been commissioned at the station. Before, the reactors' loading could be reduced if need be. Now the whole process has to be shut down instantaneously whenever any warning signal sounds.

The Chernobyl AES has generated electricity continuously throughout the 10 years since the accident, without stopping for a single minute. Today, all its 6,000 employees are profoundly convinced that the station must not be closed, especially as, if that happened, a whole series of gradually dying towns will be added to the villages that found themselves within the zone.

This is Roman Babayan, Dmitriy Akinfeyev, and Mikhail Kulevich, special correspondents for "Vesti", reporting from within 150 meters of the Chernobyl sarcophagus. [video shows sarcophagus and other shots of the Chernobyl AES; interview with Parashyn; further shots of control room, computerized diagram of reactor floor and rods] [end recording]

Ukraine: President Issues Decree Setting Up Nuclear Safety Center

LD2604223296 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1635 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev [no date as received] — President Leonid Kuchma has issued a decree on setting up a Chernobyl center for nuclear safety, radioactive waste, and radiological ecology, the information center at the nuclear regulation administration of Ukraine's Ministry of Environment and Nuclear Safety has told UNIAN.

The center is being set up with the aim of developing international research into the problems of eliminating the consequences of nuclear and radiological accidents, decommissioning nuclear facilities, and ensuring ecological rehabilitation of contaminated environment.

The Ministry of Environment and Nuclear Safety, the Ministry of Protection of the Population from the Consequences of the Accident at Chernobyl, the State Committee for the Use of Nuclear Power, the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, and other institutions will join the center in its activities.

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Valeriy Hlyhalo, deputy director of the state research center for nuclear and radiological safety under Ukraine's Ministry of Environment and Nuclear Safety, has been appointed coordinating director of the center for nuclear safety, radioactive waste, and radiological ecology. Hlyhalo has been charged with the task of drawing up the regulations of the center and a program for its development.

Ukraine: Prime Minister Discusses Economic Situation, Budget

WS2604130496 Kiev VSEUKRAINSKIYE VEDOMOSTI in Russian 20 Apr 96 p 5

[Report by Yuriy Khlestun: "Prime Minister Yevhen Marchuk: 'In December We Had To Take All Money To Scrape Up $527 Million To Repay the Foreign Debt'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] As we already reported, last Wednesday [17 April] a general meeting of the National Academy of Sciences was held at which Prime Minister Yevhen Marchuk delivered a speech on the state of affairs. At the very last moment, when all the complaints, reproaches, and requests addressed to the government were expressed, Y. Marchuk asked B. Paton, chairman of the meeting, for permission to take the floor once again — as he expressed it — "to familiarize scientists about the problems now being resolved at the national level." To the advantage of a handful of journalists who were present in the conference room, the second part of the prime minister's speech appeared to be an extraordinary comprehensive analysis how our state arrived at its current critical situation. We would like to familiarize our readers with the key provisions of this speech.

About the Domestic Debt

The current government was established in June 1995 and began its work at the beginning of autumn. This government inherited an $8.5- billion debt to which it had no relation and the repayment of which had to be conducted in a manner any civilized country would use. The gas debt in 1994 alone amounted to $1.5 billion to Russia and $700 million to Turkmenistan. Thanks to our partners, and primarily to the Russian Government — which accepted the idea of restructuring the debts but not of their abolition — we are able with great efforts to repay them. All this is a heavy burden for our country. Here is one example: On 30 December 1995 at 1800 we searched for every penny, given that we were in danger of losing all the credits. All investors connected with the World and European banks would have discontinued any relations with our state, if Ukraine had not been able to repay the debt to which — I would like to underline — the current government had no relation. The government did not take even a one-dollar loan in 1995. In December 1995 alone, it was necessary to reimburse $527 million to our creditors. We were forced to use the domestic reserves which include salaries and pensions. However, if we had not repayed these debts, currently we would have had even greater problems. The issue of gas supply, although based on contracts, would be extremely problematic this year.

About the Price for Moderate Reform

Many people do not realize what the price is for lagging behind in the area of the implementation of reform. All our neighbors are far ahead of us. They all are experiencing an increase in GDP, but weare experiencing a decrease in GDP. Almost all of our neighbors have completed the process of privatization. Billions of dollars are invested in Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia. Altogether, $400 million were invested in Ukraine in 1995. Why is that? First, privatization of land has not been completed. Second, not a single investor will become interested in a facility which has to maintain housing, preschools, and swimming pools. We should "separate" the production costs from the social sphere. This is an extremely sensitive social issue. In 1996 some 25 trillion karbovantsi [K] has been earmarked for the resolution of this problem.

About the Price for Mining Problems

Unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately, all this [K25 trillion] will be spent on the mining sector.

Last year, we did on a macro scale what we had not done earlier. As a result, the inflation rate was 3 percent in March. Instead of a borrower paying 260-percent interest in 1994 for a Ukrainian National Bank credit, he now pays a 75-percent rate. Naturally, this is very high interest. Currently, the karbovanets rate is not falling and the increase in payments is not lagging behind the increase in prices, although the procedure of paying salaries has been carried out with delays. For the first time, in 1995 we managed to avoid inflationary "injections." However, our neighbors managed to do all this two to five years ago.

Therefore, if we say that we are late with reform, this also means that we still have the old industrial structure. As late as at the end of 1995, we managed — nervously and using forceful methods — to begin the reformation of the mining sector which is the basic element of the power engineering industry. To do so, we had to dismiss the minister and replace the board members. We wasted two months on this. In this case, there is a problem of the lobby and a political tint of the issue.

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About the Situation in Nuclear Power Engineering

We could see that nuclear power engineering would help us out. However, its management structure is archaic. This structure does not allow the stations to earn money for their own needs. Currently this sector needs over K100 trillion; the stations lack money for the elementary reconstruction and the provision of security. Only when we gathered all the opponents in one room did we manage to reach an accord. We had to replace the leadership of the State Commission for Nuclear Issues, due to its rigid stance which was the following: "Everything has to be done this way and not otherwise!" Meanwhile, the nuclear sector was on its way to destruction.

About the Price for "Tavriya" [passenger car]

The former manager of the "AvtoZAZ" [Zaporizhya car factory] managed to receive from the Supreme Council exemptions from taxes and excise taxes in 1995. He was exerting pressure on us, demanding the allocation of trillions of karbovantsi. However, there were no changes in the enterprise's structure. In the end, it led to the following situation: the price for a "Tavriya" was almost the same as for a "Mercedes." Even Russia stopped purchasing these cars for disabled people. We do not have a salary payment crisis; we have a technological crisis. With the participation of scientists, we will have to change all the resource-and energy-consuming technologies.

About Unpaid Pensions

We are observing a smaller decline than in 1995. However, it is still a decline.... As of 16 April, 40 percent of budget revenues were missing. They were not deducted for two reasons. The first reason is that industries do not operate. Second is the mess in the structure of the executive power. An oblast chairman can threaten his subordinate: "If you deduct revenues to the Central Pension Fund, than you better move to Kiev together with your deductions." The Pension Fund's missing sum for the coal sector amounts to several dozen trillion karbovantsi. I am not talking about specific oblasts. On 30 April, the Cabinet of Ministers will discuss the issue of budget revenues, as well as the issue of raising them. Cases where there are objective reasons are a separate matter. However, in those cases where there were ill-intentioned activities, we will have to apply very drastic measures, regardless of posts. These are only some of the reasons which affect the budget.

About the Threat of a Budget Collapse

Believe me, after we restore order in the area of budgetary revenues, the financing of science will be of a priority nature for us. The finance minister briefs me every morning on the volumes of deductions, requirements, and our plans. The agricultural minister calls me: "If we do not add an additional K3 trillion to the K21 trillion which has been already allocated for the agricultural sector, than the agricultural sector will discontinue the spring field work." The coal industry minister says: "I will not be able to master the situation if an additional K4 to K5 trillion is not allocated: 15 mines are on strike and several others are going to join them." As you see, just two ministers ask for K8 trillion. Meanwhile, there is only K2.8 trillion in the budget.

The collapse of the Soviet Union did not take place in Belovyezhskaya Pushcha, but when the USSR's budget began to collapse. Afterwards, there were a lot of pompous events; there was Gorbachev, rituals, and ceremonies; however, there was no more Soviet Union. Currently, there is a serious threat of the central budget collapsing. Among the reasons behind this situation are the conscious or unconscious activities on the part of oblast leaderships and ministries, and even machinations — about which we have no doubts — on the part of certain enterprise leaders.

Ukraine: Communist Leader Calls For Protests Against Constitution

LD2704183096 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1240 GMT 27 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — Petro Symonenko, first secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine Central Committee, has urged the party's branch leaders to be resolute at a "turning point in the debate on a major issue, the adoption of a Constitution."

Addressing an all-Ukrainian conference of the Communist Party's town and district committee first secretaries on 27 April, he said:

"Communists must counter the government's attempts to push forth an antipopular draft constitution with mass protest actions."

Symonenko called on party members to use the May holidays [1 and 9 May] to show their attitude to the draft constitution and the government's policy on the whole. He warned against "leftist extremism" and stressed the need to establish links with ideologically close organizations. Ukrainian communists should learn from their Russian colleagues to set up party committees at enterprises and find common goals with trade unions, Symonenko said.

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Ukraine: Journalist Interviews Leader of Crimea Party

WS2604141596 Kiev ZERKALO NEDELI in Russian 20-26 Apr 96 p 4

[Interview with Volodymyr Shevyov, leader of the Party of Economic Revival of Crimea, by Volodymyr Prytula; place and date not given: "We Are Not Afraid of Struggle...."]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Prytula] Mr. Shevyov, recently, the leftist forces, particularly the Communist Party, have been quite toughly criticized by the Party of Economic Revival of Crimea [PEVK] and you, its leader. How realistic is a threat of the leftist revenge and what are its consequences for society?

[Shevyov] First of all, I want to draw your attention to the fact that I do not think that the communists are the leftists, they are rather the forces of the right. The communists, about whom I am speaking, are trying to win power back by any means. They pose a threat, because the people who were nominated by the incumbent leaders of the Communist Party are currently working in practically all power structures — at least this is true for Crimea. This implies that a nutritious soil for communist revenge is preserved in the power structures. Precisely this is the difference between the Communist Party and all the other parties which were formed after the collapse of the USSR. The communists are also dangerous, because — by taking advantage of objective difficulties of the current period during which our state, after its collapse, is undergoing, so to say, a complete overhaul — they are trying to make everything return to the past. A situation similar to the one which took place two years ago when Crimean residents believed in Meshkov's slogans could be repeated today. All the people knew that these slogans were unrealistic, but they wanted to have their pensions in rubles, etc., hence the people voted for him. Now communists are finding problems that are common for all. They promise to resolve them, but they never explain to anyone through which mechanism they will do this, because there is simply no such mechanism. Being demagogic and playing with the feelings of the people, communists are simply trying to come to power.

[Prytula] It is known that both the leftist majority in the Ukrainian Supreme Council and the majority in the Crimean Supreme Soviet — your "Creation" faction is the core of it — have a very critical approach toward a new draft of the Ukrainian constitution. Is it not strange?

[Shevyov] You understand that the Crimean Supreme Soviet's attitude is critical not to the entire text of the draft Ukrainian constitution, but to its chapter 10 — "Crimean Autonomy." This issue is the most important. If tenets of this chapter correspond to Ukrainian legislation — if it uses [the terms] "Constitution of Crimea," but not the "Charter of the Crimean Autonomy," or "The Autonomous Republic," or the "autonomy," and so on — I am sure that the Crimean legislature will also change its attitude toward it. I am sure of this! I have no doubts regarding the fact that we must adopt this draft constitution. In addition, if we want to build a new society, if we want to implement all our reforms, it is natural that we must strengthen our executive power. It is unquestionable. It is impossible to pull the country out of the current situation through old methods and means — through the system of soviets — because the higher the amount of soviets in Ukraine, the higher the degree of unaccountability, when one is accountable for nothing. This cannot be allowed in the current critical situation.

[Prytula] Over the past six months, the leaders of the Crimean legislature ahave been tryng to find common language with official Kiev, but quite strange things took place. For example, the Crimean Supreme Soviet has recently sent its appeals — containing statements on the "colonial" status of Crimea — to eight entities. It did so on the eve of the Russian president's visit to Ukraine, which is very important for us! Figuratively speaking, is it not a "stab in the back" of Ukrainian foreign policy?

[Shevyov] No, never, it is absolutely wrong! The reason is something else. I think that a lot of things are taking place, because the real situation is misunderstood. For example, the president says one thing, but officials reporting to him do something completely different. Such situations must not take place in the state. Here is another case: we have learned that there are plans in the Ukrainian Supreme Council to discuss the introduction of changes in the law on the prosecutor in order to deprive the highest legislative body of Crimea — the Crimean Supreme Soviet — of the right to influence the nomination of a Crimean prosecutor who must observe the fulfillment of laws precisely on Crimean territory. I think that they must at least coordinate a candidate for this post with us. Why is all this taking place? I believe that mistrust, which nestles in the hearts of many officials, is harmfully influencing the general situation in the country. The sooner we get rid of it, the better. The higher the trust between Kiev and Simferopol the better, because the situation on our peninsula will become much quieter.

[Prytula] Not too long ago, the Communist Party of Crimea [KPK] came out with an initiative to collect signatures in order to support a demand to hold the Crimean referendum on the early dissolution of the Crimean Supreme Soviet and on the dismissal of its

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chairman. A year ago the PEVK also demanded the dissolving of the Crimean legislature. Today your party is exerting great influence on the Crimean Supreme Soviet's policy, and is that not the reason for the PEVK's negative attitude toward the KPK initiative?

[Shevyov] At the time, I told KPK Committee First Secretary Leonid Hrach: "Leonid Ivanovych, even if you win, we will still preserve our influence, irrespective of whether you like it or not, because we will work and fight, we cannot act in any other way. We have something to defend; hence, we will not be indifferent to the the situation!" In contrast to Leonid Ivanovych, who simply joined the silent opposition, after Meshkov refused to nominate him as Supreme Soviet chairman for his support during the Crimean presidential elections, we fought from the very first day and we were never afraid to fight. As regards our influence, we had it — judging from the press — under Bagrov [former Crimean Supreme Soviet chairman]; under [former Crimean President] Meshkov; under Tsekov, [former Crimean Supreme Soviet chairman]; under [former Crimean Prime Minister] Saburov; and under [former Crimean Prime Minister] Franchuk, that is, under any rule. All the time they say that we are the ruling party. Why? Because all the time we are fighting and struggling. As regards the collection of signatures and the dissolution of the Crimean legislature, the current situation is very advantageous for communists, and they understand this. A simple fight for power is going on and you cannot call it by any other name. They want to achieve and to do something not for the country or for the people, but in order to satisfy only their mercenary interests. Therefore, we oppose this measure. We realize that this will harm the people today.

[Prytula] Volodymyr Ilyyich, since your position is an anticommunist one, are you going to support an appeal by the Crimean Democratic Forum, which took place in Simferopol on 15 April, to support the constitutional process in Ukraine and to ban the KPK?

[Shevyov] I will say the following: In principle, the communist ideology is not bad. The other issue is that it is misapplied in real life: while the communists are propagandizing certain concepts and are issuing appeals to implement them, they, in essence, are doing something else. Therefore, I think that it is necessary to view and judge not their ideology, but actions of specific people. This will be correct. As regards the ban on the KPK, perhaps one cannot ban it by collecting signatures. One can ban any party for its specific activities. When there are specific actions, it is necessary to file an application to the court and let the court ban the party.

[Prytula] Over the past several weeks, a number of explosions and terror attacks on PEVK activists took place. Can you explain this?

[Shevyov] Precisely on Wednesday, the PEVK office was fired on; the following day, the apartment of PEVK member A. Lytvynenko, Crimean minister of culture, was also a target of bullets. Fortunately, there were no victims. We assess all these explosions, all these firings as a simple attempt to scare us. Such terror attacks are causing minor damage, except when V. Sverdlovskyy was wounded. This was an attempt to scare the PEVK, which is a real force able to oppose them. There is no another explanation for this.

[Prytula] Who do you imply by "them?"

[Shevyov] We understand who profits from this. But I think that we will be able to learn who is behind all this. Judging from all the data I have, these crimes will likely be resolved. But let us not discuss this issue now, let us wait.

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Belarus

Belarus: Lukashenka Address on Chernobyl Anniversary

WS2604123596 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 1800 GMT 25 Apr 96

[Address to the nation by Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster, on 25 April — live or recorded; in Russian]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dear compatriots, esteemed citizens of the Republic of Belarus!

Ten years has passed since that tragic night when a dire environmental tragedy, in terms of its consequences, occurred at the Chernobyl nuclear electric power plant. During those sorrowful April days of 1986, we encountered a calamity previously unknown to mankind. The Chernobyl tragedy affected the fates of millions of people — every fifth Belarusian. Over 2 million people inhabiting 25 percent of the Republic's territory were exposed to radiation. According to the most modest estimates, the economic damage caused by this accident to Belarus amounted to 32 annual budgets of the Republic, or $235 billion. It deprived the economy of large areas of fertile land. Around 300 facilities of the national economy, 95 hospitals, 54 large agricultural companies, 600 schools and kindergartens, and 550 trade, public catering, and consumer service companies stopped operating in the Chernobyl area. Inhabitants had to abandon over 400 populated areas. The fates and hopes of real people lie behind these statistics.

To find a reliable solution for the present and the future, we should learn a lesson from the first decade following Chernobyl. We all remember the kind of burden it was. Not only former leaders of our country, but also the world community were initially unable to assess the scale of the Chernobyl disaster. There were attempts to hush it up and tragic mistakes were made. However, there was something else. To overcome the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster, the resources of a large state were mobilized. Believe me, had the Soviet Union continued to exist, many Chernobyl projects would have been implemented by now. Suffice it to say that in 1995, to overcome the Chernobyl calamity, Belarus was able to earmark as little as 10 percent of the money earmarked for this purpose in the USSR, exerting unbelievable economic efforts. Being a people's deputy and opposing the destruction of the USSR in 1991, I primarily thought what would happen if Belarus ended up alone with the Chernobyl calamity.

At that time, however, political ambitions prevailed over the people's interests. Well known politicians used the Chernobyl tragedy as a trump card in their political game. Instead of a sober and level-headed attitude toward the problems brought about by the Chernobyl disaster, his supporters [as heard] held rallies to exert pressure on bodies of power and administration. Political adventurists have been playing this card for 10 years now without doing anything for the people who suffered from the disaster. These days, they are again trying to use Chernobyl to improve their political capital. Messrs. [preceding word in Belarusian], I have to state in this regard that you will not achieve anything. The Belarusian people will not accept this.

The most important lesson from the first decade is as follows: The Chernobyl tragedy is the people's calamity, and one should not transform it into any kind of instrument to satisfy political ambitions. It is time to understand that we have one motherland and one earth. We all should unite in the name of the nation's survival and in overcoming our common calamity.

Of course, the preserving of people's health, of the health of the children of those who participated in the Chernobyl cleanup program — of all who had suffered from Chernobyl — continues to be the first and the most important issue for us. The state must provide all those who suffered with medical aid to meet all their needs in this difficult time. The president will personally supervise the medical treatment of more than 1,500 children who are seriously sick. Belarusian health resorts on our territory and abroad will handle the recuperation of children. We have agreed with the Russian leadership that Russian Federation sanatoria will be used for our citizens who suffered due to the Chernobyl catastrophe to recuperate. Various centers are also participating in the strengthening of people's health. To my deep regret, some of them are trying to profit from the Chernobyl disaster. The state cannot be indifferent toward officials, businessmen, and activists of pseudo-Chernobyl funds who are taking advantage of our people's tragedy. Stringent public supervision over the distribution of humanitarian aid delivered from abroad should be organized. This humanitarian aid must reach those who need it, not placed in commercial kiosks. The primary portion of the humanitarian aid should be delivered through state channels. The task to establish normal living conditions for the people in polluted areas is no less important. Literally recently, I visited the Chernobyl-affected rayons, where I could see the difficult conditions the people are living under. In each Chernobyl-affected rayon, all people who have no relatives, who are sick, all those who have no means for normal life should be registered and provided with support. The Finance Ministry will allocate funds — through targeted programs — to executive councils in Chernobyl-affected rayons. The fact

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that local authorities do not provide the people with whatever is appropriate causes our particular indignation. The development and maintenance of the bus network, the delivery of foodstuffs, providing medicines, and a lot of other issues critcial for the people must be resolved precisely by local authorities. We must preserve the free catering in schools and preschool institutions. The recuperation care of the people who live in Chernobyl-affected areas must be free. I have instructed the government to preserve the free catering in schools and to finance — from the budget — the recuperation of the children in the areas which are regarded by law as clean. The present and future of these areas depend a lot on whether hospitals are staffed with physicians and whether schools are staffed with teachers. The current situation in this sphere cannot be tolerated any longer. Health Minister Inesa Drabyshewskaya; Ivan Kenik, minister for emergency situations and protection of population from the consequences of Chernobyl catastrophe; as well as Education and Science Minister Vasil Strazhaw will be personally accountable for staffing all hospitals and schools in the Chernobyl-affected zone with physicians and teachers. We are now beginning to reap the fruits of activities when the people had been thoughtlessly — despite their wishes — moved away from the Chernobyl-affected zone. Today many people are returning to their abandoned houses, because they want to live and work in their native places. I am sure that authorities have no right to place obstacles in the way of these people; this would not be according to Christian, humane ethics. There is hope that given the targeted state support, some Chernobyl-affected rayons could in time be returned to normalcy.

Esteemed friends! I am sure that we will return to our villages, to our land. You will receive all kinds of support from me. Research conducted over the past years proves that if a complex of special agrotechnical, agrochemical, and other measures is conducted, we would be able to obtain environmentally safe products on this land. If the people observe protection measures, they will be able to live normally and to earn their living. All this can only be achieved if targeted money is used primarily in the Chernobyl-affected zone. The former practice, when money allocated for the needs of the Chernobyl -affected zone were distributed all over the Republic, proved wrong. I am sure that in Chernobyl-affected rayons there must be ideal order on all issues. The housing construction must be of high quality; the level of medical and municipal services, as well as conditions for work and for rest must be high. What I had seen in Khoyniki Rayon proves that this level of organization is quite realistic. One must only handle these issues competently.

The improvement of living conditions of settlers concerns the life of hundreds of thousands of people. The state is allocating considerable means for these purposes. But they are not always used effectively. When I recently was in Mahilew Oblast, I saw cases of shocking irresponsibility and of poor management. Settlements which had been built for settlers from the Chernobyl-affected zone, but which had not been made available to them, are in a poor state and their property is being misappropriated. The people are complaining of the anarchy and of the indifference on the part of local authorities; they are complaining of prices which are being constantly raised by sales depots of the Belarusian Cooperative Union. Very often the people cannot buy critical staples, primarily medicines. Directly at the meeting in Mahilew, I had to dismiss several local officials for the unsatisfactory management of settlements for settlers from the Chernobyl-affected zone.

The authorities should care for the needs and problems of the resettlers, taking into account their established way of life. Those people who were engaged and would like to engage in agriculture should receive land plots close to places of their residence, particularly the people who have been resettled to cities from villages and small settlements. If a person wants to live in a private house, he or she must not be forcefully moved into an urban-type apartment.

At the same time, the people who establish themselves in new places should understand that currently the state does not have the opportunity to adequately finance the Chernobyl programs. During my trip to Brest, Homyel, and Mahilyow oblasts, I again arrived at the conclusion that as early as this year we must resolve a number of problems concerning all people affected by the Chernobyl accident. In the immediate future, we should start reviewing the legal base for all the activities on minimizing the consequences of the Chernobyl catastrophe. This is the most important task for both the government and Supreme Soviet deputies.

We should change pension laws to more fully take into account the interests of those who have suffered from the Chernobyl accident. During my trip to the Chernobyl-affected areas, I arrived at one definite conclusion: by the end of 1996, no matter what problems we experience in light of the current level of prices, we must, we simply must find funds to increase pensions by 150,000-200,000 rubles [R] and to increase wages by R300,000-400,000. We must establish allowances for child care, paid maternity leaves, and free catering for children. We must make corrections in price policy so as to make basic foodstuffs and clothing available to all the residents of the Chernobyl-affected areas. The government should take urgent measures to strengthen

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the discipline and responsibility of officials at all levels for the state of affairs in the Chernobyl-affected areas and for organizing the resettled people's lives in their new places of residence. I have given appropriate instructions and established appropriate control over their observance.

In the conditions of a socioeconomic crisis, we cannot do without foreign assistance. The Belarusian people know how to value and remember goodness. We are sincerely grateful to all those who rendered us support. We are particularly grateful to the fraternal Russian people. As you know, one of the aims of integration with Russia is to combine the efforts of the two states to eliminate the consequences of the Chernobyl tragedy. As chairman of the Higher Council of the Belarusian-Russian Community, I guarantee that our joint Chernobyl problems will not remain on paper only and will be implemented.

Unfortunately, no foreign assistance, no matter how tangible, can resolve even a portion of the Chernobyl problems, particularly since, to our regret, the world community has lowered its attention to the people affected by the Chernobyl accident. Sometimes, I want to say: God knows where else a similar accident may occur! We should clearly realize that there is no one else but us who will have to resolve the problems of medical care for the victims of the Chernobyl catastrophe. There is no one else to create acceptable living conditions in the contaminated areas and reclaim our rich arable lands. There is no one else to resolve the resettlers' problems. Therefore, we should display maximum responsibility and self-reliance and count only on ourselves.

Esteemed compatriots! Tomorrow is the day of mourning — 26 April 1996, 10 years after Chernobyl. The Park of Friendship of the Nations at the intercession of Arlowski and Karastayanava streets in Minsk has become a sacred place for all the Belarusian people affected by the Chernobyl accident. The Chernobyl Stone has been placed there, which is a symbol of our Chernobyl tragedy. The Orthodox Church is building a chapel there. A religious procession and a meeting of mourning will be held there on 26 April at 1630 [1330 GMT] at the initiative of two major churches, Chernobyl public organizations, resettlers, and participants in the post-accident cleanup, and attended by the state leadership and the president. I invite all the residents of Minsk, all those who carry the Chernobyl tragedy in their hearts to come to this sad ceremony at which citizens from the Chernobyl areas will arrive. Let us bow down to those who gave their lives while saving the lives of others in post-Chernobyl years. Let us express sincere words of gratitude to all those who were involved and are still involved in the elimination of the Chernobyl accident's aftermath. The Belarusian people have lived through more than one tragedy in their history. I am sure that again it will find enough strength to courageously overcome this trouble. Let us combine our efforts for creative work for the sake of the Belarusian people and the future of our children.

Belarus: Chernobyl Anniversary Sees Demonstrators, Police Clashes

LD2604174496 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1600 GMT 26 Apr 96

[From the Vesti newscast presented by Svetlana Sorokina]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Today was officially proclaimed a nationwide day of mourning in Belarus. However, the anniversary of the Chernobyl accident was marred by violent clashes between demonstrators and militia officers on the streets of Minsk.

[Begin recording] [Reporter L. Sviridov] Today's official rally devoted to the 10th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster, which was attended by thousands of people, was held in Minsk's Friendship of the People Park. It was organized by the Shield of Chernobyl Association. Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka and Metropolitan Filaret (of Minsk and Grodno) laid a memorial capsule in the foundations of a chapel in honor of the Virgin Mary icon, which is to commemorate the victims of the radiation tragedy. The rally was attended by representatives of all Belarus regions and by settlers evacuated from the Chernobyl zone.

Meanwhile, participants in an alternative Chernobyl demonstration headed from the Belarusian Academy of Science to the city center. There were massive clashes with the police and special forces and a number of the demonstrators were hurt. Journalists also suffered. [passage omitted]

The column of demonstrators is now moving down Frantsiska Skoriny Avenue (central thoroughfare in Minsk). We will report on further development of events in the next "Vesti" bulletin. This is Leonid Sviridov and Sergey Pushkin in Minsk. [end recording]

Belarus: Minsk Rally Demands Lukashenka Resignation

LD2704141796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1241 GMT 27 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MINSK, April 26 (Interfax-West) — At an unauthorized rally on the square in front of the Sports Palace in Minsk, some 30 thousand people adopted a resolution, demanding that Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka resign.

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They accused him of "belittling the danger of the Chernobyl disaster" and voiced the view that Russia, as the heir of the USSR, should be pressed to compensate for the damage to Belarus from the Chernobyl accident.

Denouncing the ongoing process of Russian-Belarusian integration, Zenon Poznyak, leader of the opposition Belarusian Popular Front, condemned it "a quiet occupation of Belarus by Russia."

Heeding Poznyak's call, protesters observed a minute of silence to pay homage to the Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev.

"Chechnya has taken upon itself the entire burden of Russia's imperial manners," Poznyak said, adding that "by fighting for Chechnya's freedom, Dudayev championed the freedom of Belarus, too."

Poznyak also reported that Belarusian member of parliament Alyaksandr Dobrovolskiy, leader of the republic's Combined Democratic Party, had been injured in earlier clashes between OMON [Special Purpose Militia Detachment] police and demonstrators.

Some 50,000 people took part in the demonstration that preceded the rally. Police used truncheons to disperse the crowd. Protesters overturned three traffic police vans.

Ten persons with light injuries, mostly scratches and bruises, were admitted to a hospital, a doctor on duty has reported.

Addressing the rally, deputy parliament speaker Gennadiy Karpenko, a leader of the right-wing republican forces, denounced police actions. "But, the authorities will fail to conquer their people," he declared.

According to Poznyak, the authorities did all they could to prevent busses with regional popular front supporters from entering Minsk. In addition to that, Poznyak said, representatives of the Ukrainian right-wing forces were taken off the train after crossing the Ukrainian-Belarusian border yesterday. However, some members of the Ukrainian national parties Rukh and UNA UNSO [National Assembly-National Defense] made it to Minsk and attended the rally.

Protesters decided to continue their anti-presidential demonstration in Minsk on May 1 holiday.

Belarus: Up To 200 Reported Arrested After Yesterday's Minsk Rally

LD2704163296 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 1500 GMT 27 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Some, so far unofficial, results of yesterday's Charnobylski Shliakh-96 march in Minsk yesterday, which was carried out by forces opposing President Lukashenka, were made known today.

[Correspondent Aleksandr Stupnikov] Up to 200 people, including 17 activists of the Ukrainian UNA-UNSO [National Assembly-National Defense], who came to assist the Belarusian supporters of the opposition of extreme views, were arrested. Late yesterday evening, at 2230, buses carrying unknown armed people, many of whom were in tracksuits, arrived at the headquarters of the Belarusian Popular Front. And the front's activists, who were in the office, were detained overnight and up to midday today. They included Syarhey Antonchyk, one of the leaders of the workers' movement, and Pavel Zvanets, deputy of the Belarusian Supreme Council. By midday today, they were released without explanation. By all accounts, the Belarusian authorities, who refused to allow the participants in the thousands-strong demonstration to carry out a lawful march in mourning for the memory of the victims of Chernobyl, intended to use the clashes between the demonstrators and the Spetsnaz and OMON [Special Purpose Militia Detachment] to accuse the Belarusian Popular Front of provoking disturbances.

Meanwhile, Alyaksandr Lukashenka signed a decree, temporarily banning strikes and rallies. Earlier, the authorities had allowed the trade unions to hold a mass rally of the working people on 1 May, on the central Independence Square in Minsk. However, it is known that activists of the independent and free trade unions, as well as the Workers of Belarus, who are opposed to the authorities, intend to attend this rally.

Belarus: Lukashenka Plans To Ban Rallies, Demonstrations

LD2704135596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1241 GMT 27 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MINSK, April 27 (Interfax-West) — Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka has announced the authorities' intention to impose a provisional ban on rallies and demonstrations in the country.

The ban is likely to be imposed for the period until May 1, Lukashenka told Interfax in an interview Saturday.

The opposition Belarusian Popular Front has planned to launch a rally on May 1. However, this action will be considered as illegal, Lukashenka said.

"One should work rather than rally," he added.

About 30,000 people rallied in the Belarusian capital of Minsk on April 26. Those at the unauthorized rally in front of the Palace of Sports in central Minsk demanded that President Lukashenka resign. The action was initiated by the Belarusian Popular Front.

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Lukashenka said he saw the unauthorized rally as "uproar and the last sighs of ill people who have put themselves beyond the limits of the law." "It's good that they did not take out sawn-off guns. These people [the rally's organizers - IF] are armed to the teeth," he said.

Those at the April 26 unauthorized rally announced their intention to launch a similar action in Minsk on May 1 which was traditionally marked in Soviet times as a day honoring labor.

Moldova

Moldova: Melescanu: Romania Wants 'Fraternity, Integration' Treaty

AU2704140196 Chisinau INFOTAG in English 1859 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau, April 26 (INFOTAG) — Romania is insisting on signing with the Republic of Moldova a special treaty of fraternity and integration, Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Teodor Melescanu has stated in his interview published today in TARA, the newspaper of the opposition Christian-Democratic Popular Front of Moldova.

"Never, not for a second, have we renounced even the name of the document. In the Romanian side's propositions, it is still named the Treaty of Fraternity and Integration. But this proposition has been coming across certain difficulties. I wish very much that nobody, from either side, ever had even a shadow of doubt that Romania in that treaty will recognize independence, statehood, and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova, and promises to defend them from real dangers," the Romanian minister stated.

He emphasized that Romania in no way threatens Moldova's statehood, as some people use to say. In his words, a threat is coming from quite another direction.

"Unfortunately, we failed to include this treaty into the draft basic treaty. The relations between Romania and Moldova are not the relations between just a couple of states. These are ties between two states which have a common cultural, spiritual, historical, social, and, for many families, even personal heritage.

"So, how should we reflect in the treaty the double approach — the relationship between two independent and sovereign states that have very much in common? And here we find out that the sides have different attitudes to this position," Teodor Melescanu says.

"Our Chisinau colleagues show a good understanding of the situation, but the project they are suggesting fails to contain very many essential elements which they have been refusing to support, beginning from the very name of the document," he points out.

"So far, neither side shows a wish to give up anything. I believe, both the relationship between the two independent states and their special relations ought to be very clearly reflected in the treaty," the minister said.

Moldova: Dniester Bloc Supports Zyuganov as Russian President

AU2704140496 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 2020 GMT 26 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tiraspol 26/4/1996 (BASApress) — The Coordinating Council of the leftist Dniester Patriotic Forces Bloc (PFB) released yesterday a decision supporting Gennadiy Zyuganov for the Russian presidential office.

A PFB leader said the bloc would conduct propaganda activities to support Zyuganov.

According to a PFB appeal to Dniester citizens who adopted Russian citizenship and Russians from former Soviet republics, "Will we have a quiet living or will we have to join the ranks of refugees and those who were forced to leave" depends upon the elections in Russia.

"For six years have the Dniester people have been waging an exhausting and courageous fight to reestablish the common country — the Soviet Union," said the appeal.

The PFB called on Russians residing in the Dniester region to vote for the Communist Zyuganov.

Other political movements or parties in the Dniester region have not yet pronounced themselves upon the upcoming elections in Russia.

Moldova: Parliament Support's Snegur's Move on Journalists' Freedom

LD2604180196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1535 GMT 26 Apr 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Moldovan parliament has unanimously supported President Mircea Snegur's legislative initiative on abolishing article 203 of the Criminal Code under which journalists can be brought to criminal accountability for offending the honor and dignity of the head of state and the parliamentary chairman.

Several criminal cases on offending the honor and dignity of the president have been instituted against journalists during the year that followed the adoption of the law on the press and amendments to the Criminal

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Code. All of these criminal cases were later closed on Snegur's request.

After submitting his legislative motion to the parliament, Snegur also requested the court to close the criminal case earlier instituted against the Youth of Moldova newspaper.

Chairman of the Parliamentary Sub-Commission on the Media Arhip Cybotaru said he saw the president's proposal as "justified and just."

"The constitution stipulates that all citizens are equal before the law. Thus, the president and the parliamentary chairman can defend their honor and dignity in the court as other citizens do," he said.

The parliamentary opposition backed the president's motion as "contributing to the democratization of the press and the media's freedom," observers stressed. Earlier, the majority of Snegur's legislative initiatives failed to find support with MPs.

Nevertheless, representatives of the opposition called Snegur's motion as "populist and aimed at winning the sympathy of the press and voters in the year of presidential elections."

The opposition recalled that Chairman of the Popular Front, MP Yuriy Roshka submitted such a proposal for consideration by the parliament as early as in October 1995, but the initiative then went unnoticed.

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Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan: Nazarbayev Backs Yeltsin, Announces Chechen Mediation Call

MM2604152296 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 27 Apr 96 p 1

[Report by correspondent Yuriy Kirinitsiyanov: "The Volga Flows Into the Caspian. But What About the Caspian — Is It a Sea or a Lake? That Is What the Leaders of Russia and Kazakhstan Will Try To Work Out"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Almaty — Russian President Boris Yeltsin arrives in Almaty today. Literally the day before, at the presentation of his new book "On the Threshold of the 21st Century" ["Na Poroge XXII Veka"], Nursultan Nazarbayev made at least four sensational announcements associated in one way or another with the visit by the head of the Russian Federation.

A book by an active politician is always an event. But it is a subject for a separate and unhurried analysis. However, one point can be noted off the cuff, as the saying goes. Nursultan Abishevich devotes much space in his observations to politicians in the far abroad — Bush, Thatcher, Kohl. And he only provides very meager, sketchy portraits of his colleagues, the presidents of the CIS countries. That is to say, in the author's own frank explanation: It is awkward to write about existing state leaders, he says, the time has not yet come, and you "don't want to offend them."

So his frankness with journalists on the eve of the Russian president's visit appears all the more significant. And some of the announcements are verging on the sensational.

Nazarbayev announced that representatives of the Chechen opposition, "via Turkey," have asked him to take part in a mediation mission — to organize the proposed talks between B. Yeltsin and the rebel leaders.

Second, an equally important piece of news. Kazakhstan and Russia are apparently finally going to reach a consensus on the status of the Caspian. You would think it was a purely geographical brain-teaser that has been wrestled with for some years now in political spheres: Is the Caspian a sea or a lake? Russia believes that each littoral state should give its consent to economic activity within the "lake-sea." Nature here is all too fragile, the animal world is unique. But the most important thing is the oil reserves on the shelf. But apparently Kazakhstan has still been able to uphold the right to its own sovereign "piece" of the Caspian. However, the question of Russia's consent does not apply anyway in this case. Both Kazakhstani and Russian capital, as well as foreign capital, will be working in the Kazakhstani sector.

The lack of a legal settlement over the Caspian has hampered both sides: What law-abiding Western investor will risk his capital until all the commas are in place? Now it seems that this annoying obstacle will be removed. And the opportunity to announce a third sensation opens up immediately. Another epic that has lasted many years is coming to an end — the prolonged talks about the creation of the Caspian Pipeline Consortium. This is also a very noteworthy story. It has been impossible to reduce the future partners' interests to a common denominator.

Be that as it may, the superproject costing 1.5 billion U.S. dollars is taking on visible features. Chevron is joined by another seven oil corporations, including British Gas, Mobil, Agip, and other world-famous firms. According to preliminary estimates, between them they will own half of all the shares in the Caspian Pipeline Consortium, while Russia and Kazakhstan will have 25 percent each.

And finally, the fourth sensation — possibly the most important for the Russian president. For the first time, Nazarbayev openly came out in favor of Yeltsin's candidacy in the June elections, although he made the traditional reservation, pledging to respect any choice made by the Russian people.

Kazakhstan: Yeltsin Arrives in Almaty En Route for Moscow

LD2704084196 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0820 GMT 27 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Akimov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Almaty, 27 Apr — Russian President Boris Yeltsin, having ended his visit to China, arrived today on a brief working visit to Almaty. Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev met him at the aircraft steps.

According to early reports the visit will be short and the Russian president will leave for Moscow by air today.

Kazakhstan: Yeltsin, Nazarbayev Sign Package of Documents

LD2704130296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1144 GMT 27 Apr 96

[By Vladimir Akimov and Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ALMATY, April 27 (Itar-Tass) - Boris Yeltsin and Nursultan Nazarbayev on Saturday,

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upon concluding their talks, signed a joint Russian-Kazakh declaration and a statement on cooperation in the use of the Caspian Sea.

Five intergovernmental documents were also signed: a protocol on reorganisation of the Caspian pipeline consortium, agreements on pension rights guarantees for residents of Baykonur (former Leninsk), on setting up the transnational financial industrial group Elektromedpribor, on setting up a joint diesel engine production venture, and a document on a Kazakh commission for the Baykonur complex.

Kazakhstan: Yeltsin Says No Territorial Claims on Kazakhstan

LD2704141296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1345 GMT 27 Apr 96

[By Vladimir Akimov and Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ALMATY, April 27 (Itar-Tass) - Russian President Boris Yeltsin said Russia has no territorial claims either on Kazakhstan or any other country.

Speaking at a press conference in Almaty after his talks with Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev on Saturday, Yeltsin said, in response to a question about a recent statement by Russian writer Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn that Ukraine and Kazakhstan should be incorporated into Russia, that "this is Solzhenitsyn's personal opinion as a writer and it has nothing to do with the state policy."

"Kazakhstan and Ukraine are indivisible as is Russia. This is the position that I support as president. We do not claim even an inch of other countries' land, but no will we give up ours," he said.

"Respect for the independence and sovereignty of states is the main priority of our foreign policy," Yeltsin said.

"Ukraine and Kazakhstan are two independent and sovereign states which we respect and which determine their policies themselves," he added.

The Russian leader called for deeper integration among countries and stressed that this process "does not affect the independence or sovereignty of other countries. They are independent and sovereign for ever."

Kazakhstan: Yeltsin, Nazarbayev Sign Caspian Accords

LD2704195196 Almaty Kazakh Television First Program Network in Russian 1400 GMT 27 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Passage omitted]

[Unidentified correspondent] After the protocol measures the working part of the visit began. The quadripartite treaty signed on 29 March, to expand integration in the economic and humanitarian fields, raised Kazakh-Russian relations to a qualitatively new level. Proceeding from this, it was necessary to work on practical matters contained in the treaty and to use the greatest potential for forming an integration committee.

Nursultan Nazarbayev and Boris Yeltsin held one-to-one talks. During the conversation the presidents touched upon a number of matters of mutual interest and discussed the scope for further development of bilateral relations and joint actions in the international arena.

Further, talks were held with other delegation members present. It was noted that the economic ties between the two countries possess huge potential, efficient and rational use of which could play a mighty role in implementing economic reforms. Of course, problems associated with the transportation of Kazakh oil with the participation of oil companies, and crude oil and gas extraction on the territory of Kazakhstan were also touched upon.

During the talks, the presidents paid specific attention to the problems of the Caspian Sea. The heads of state agreed that a just solution to this issue in new political conditions will be of decisive importance for ensuring peace and stability in the region. The sides agreed to cooperate in solving the legal status of Caspian Sea and in using the sea's mineral and biological resources.

The documents signed following the talks by the two leaders show that this working visit by Boris Yeltsin to Kazakhstan was not an ordinary meeting. In addition, they remove from the agenda those issues that, if one can put it this way, slightly unbalanced the dynamics of bilateral relations.

The heads of state signed a joint Kazakh-Russian declaration and a joint statement by the presidents of Kazakhstan and Russia on cooperation in using the Caspian Sea. In addition, Nigmetzhan Isingarin and Oleg Soskovets, the first deputy prime ministers of the two countries, signed a package of intergovernmental agreements on the Baykonur space-vehicle launching site and on guarantees of pension rights for the town's citizens, and agreements in the economy, specifically, to set up a joint venture to produce diesel engines and on measures to set up the Elektromedpribor [electric and medical appliances] transnational financial and industrial group.

Also, a document was adopted that can be regarded as an event of international importance — Kazakhstan, Russia, and the Sultanate of Oman announced the

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signing of a joint protocol on a draft project for an oil pipeline from the Tengiz oil field in western Kazakhstan to the Black Sea port of Novorossiysk in Russia. Apart from the governments of the three states, the protocol was signed by representatives of the Russian oil company Transneft and a number of international oil supply companies, including Chevron, Mobil, and Oryx from USA, Agip from Italy, British Gas from Britain, the Russian companies LUKoil and Rosneft, and Munaygaz [oil and gas] from Kazakhstan.

After that, Presidents Nursultan Nazarbayev and Boris Yeltsin answered questions put by journalists:

[Begin recording] [Nazarbayev] The president of Russia arrived in our country at my invitation with a representative delegation to finish off problems on which we have been busy together for a long time. I told you in this hall that when I visited Boris Nikolayevich in the clinic as far back as November, we agreed that eventually we will settle the matter of the Caspian Pipeline Consortium. Today we settled it, and this is a fact of world importance.

[Yeltsin] I consider that today we have settled problems that have been awaiting a solution for many months, but unfortunately, the situation was such that I could not come earlier for various reasons. Now we have met and we have solved these problems during the talks. Now one can say with complete justification that there are neither political, nor economic, nor financial, nor international problems between Kazakhstan and Russia.

[Correspondent Erlan Bekkhozhin from Kazakh Television news program "Khabar"] You have just signed a statement on the Caspian Sea, and the representatives of the Caspian Pipeline Consortium have signed a protocol on the pipeline. Does this mean that Kazakh oil will be transported to the world market without hindrance and in the necessary volume? When we can expect that? And Boris Nikolayevich, one more question, if you will allow me: I would like your comment on Solzhenitsyn's statement on the annexation of Ukraine and Kazakhstan to Russia.

[Nazarbayev] For two to three years we have been unable to solve the problem of constructing the pipeline across the northern Caspian to Novorossiysk. At last, we have settled it today and the consortium has been set up. The construction of the pipeline will start, and we will hope that the first phase will take a year and that in approximately two or two and half years it will all be finished. This will remove any insinuations and speculation about the transportation of Kazakh oil in any different direction. This issue is removed from the agenda for at least the next 10 years.

[Yeltsin] Well, what do you think? There are different opinions. We have a pluralistic society and sometimes such senseless things are expressed. The statement that Ukraine and Kazakhstan should be annexed to Russia is his own personal opinion as a writer, which does not have anything in common with state policy. Ukraine and Kazakhstan are two independent, sovereign states, which we respect, and of course, they themselves dictate their own policy, and they themselves will determine this policy for many, many years.

We signed a four-sided document on integration between Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, and Kyrgyzstan. This is economic integration. It means joint operations by our enterprises and organizations in terms of making it easier for us to work. But this by no means touches upon the independence of a state or its sovereignty. That is eternal. [end recording]

[Bekkhozhin] To talk in greater detail about the protocol to reorganize the Caspian Pipeline Consortium, we should say that the protocol fixes a transitional period of several months, during which the sides must fulfill certain obligations and prepare a final agreement on the reorganization of the Caspian Pipeline Consortium. During the same period the oil supply companies will have exclusive rights to obtain 50 percent of shares in the Caspian Pipeline Consortium. This figure is distributed in the following way: 15 percent to Chevron, 12.3 to LUKoil, Mobil and Rosneft have 7.5 each, Agip and British Gas two percent each, and Munaygaz and Oryx 1.75 percent each. As was noted by Bin-'Ali Bin-Sultan Makbul, the minister of trade and industry of the Sultanate of Oman, we foresee a successful end to the reorganization work, which will start to supply its first oil in 1998.

Erlan Bekkhozhin, Khabar, from the president's residence.

Kazakhstan: Yeltsin Leaves for Moscow; Statement Issued on Visit

LD2704151796 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1340 GMT 27 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Vladimir Akimov and Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Translated Text] Almaty, 27 Apr — After his short working visit to Almaty, Boris Yeltsin, President of the Russian Federation, left for Moscow this evening.

A statement which was issued by an official representative of the press service of the President of the Russian Federation before the flight notes in particular that an important place in the talks between the two presidents "was occupied by an analysis of the new

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prospects for cooperation opened up as a result of the treaty signed by Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, and Kyrgyzstan on deepening integration in the economic and humanitarian spheres." Great attention "was paid to the position of our fellow-countrymen in Kazakhstan."

The sides "gave a high assessment of the dynamic ongoing nature of the development of relations between Russia and Kazakhstan and the high level of cooperation. Stres was laid on the efforts being made by the two countries to continue to make a constructive contribution to the strengthening of the integration of the CIS member states."

Kazakhstan: Nazarbayev Interviewed on Summit With Yeltsin

LD2704213296 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian 1700 GMT 27 Apr 96

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Studio announcer Igor Gymza] The Russian- Kazakhstan talks are over. Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev has kindly agreed to comment on their results. Our correspondent Aliya Nugmanova is helping us to hold a TV-bridge with Almaty.

Good evening or, to be more accurate taking into account the time difference between our capitals, good night, Mr. President!

[Nazarbayev, talking from a studio in Almaty] Indeed it is evening in Moscow but it is midnight here in the Kazakhstan capital, therefore it does not really matter whether you say good evening or good night.

[Gymza] Just yesterday you returned from China after signing a quinquepartite agreement. What does it give to Kazakhstan?

[Nazarbayev] This treaty is of exceptional importance not only to the Asian continent, the Asia-Pacific region, but, I think, to the whole world. This agreement, which covers the borders 8,000 km long and confidence in the military sphere on this border, will lead to an enormous reduction in the military potential on both sides of the border. I do not think I have to explain that this confidence on the border will boost economic cooperation between the states involved.

The fact that the delegations of five states succeeded in reaching an agreement on such a complicated matter shows that, provided the countries use good will as their guideline, they can reach an agreement on any major conflict issue or problem.

[Gymza] Nursultan Abishevich, what do you think about integration processes between Russia and Kazakhstan?

[Nazarbayev] We signed two agreements at top level. The first was a joint statement on the Caspian Sea and the other was a Kazakhstan-Russian statement, or declaration as we call it, on our relations. It clearly states that the quadripartite agreement signed in Moscow on 29 March, brings Russian-Kazakhstan relations to an entirely new level. We are now talking about actively involving the executive committee so that the documents are ratified in all four states and genuinely bringing to life the integration process between the four states.

[Gymza] Mr. President, a question on a different subject. The General Procuracy of Kazakhstan has suspended the activity of the republic's Communist Party.

[Nazarbayev, interrupting] First of all, nobody has yet suspended anything. As in an any civilized state, and even more so in our state, which is building a country governed by law, the procuracy is responsible for how the country's Constitution and laws are adhered to. The procuracy determines any breaches and then passes the matter to the judicial body for a decision.

Judging by the information I received from the General Procuracy, that is what happened. The General Procuracy determined that Kazakhstan's Constitution and laws had been violated. In this connection it submitted a proposal to the Ministry of Justice. The president did not intervene and he should not do so, because appropriate law enforcement bodies deal with such matters.

[Gymza] Mr. President, thank you for this interview.

[Nazarbayev] Thank you very much, Igor for this meeting on air. All good wishes to all TV viewers, both in Russia and Kazakhstan! I wish our good relations, the ancient friendship between our states will become stronger. I hope we will jointly proceed along the path of democratic and economic reforms.

[Gymza] Once again, thank you.

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